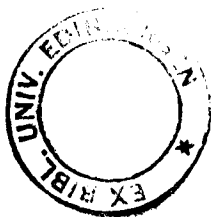


a Thesis presented for the Degree of Ph.D.

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THE ORIGINS OF CONGREGATIONALISM IN SCOTLAND.



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F O R E W O R D.

The study that follows deals with the origins of Congregationalism in Scotland, and the period it covers is, therefore, from 1584, when Scottish people became first acquainted with Congregational principles, to 1812, when the present Congregational Union of Scotland was formed and modern Scottish Congregationalism may be regarded as having passed beyond the preliminary, experimental stage. A considerable part of the study is devoted to the Haldane movement in which the existing Congregational communion was born, but there were Congregationalists in Scotland before the Haldanes, and there were Congregational Churches before the Tabernacles began to rise throughout the land. To these early experiments in Congregationalism a considerable part of the study is devoted.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED.

- Baillie: The Letters & Journals of R. Baillie
- B.U.K. - Books of the Universall Kirk of Scotland
- Calderwood - D. Calderwood, A History of the Kirk of Scotland
- Campbell, A.J.: - A.J. Campbell, Two Centuries of the Church of Scotland
- Consults of Ministers in Edin. - Register of the Consultations of the Ministers of Edinburgh and Some Other Brethren in the Ministry Vol. I.
- Cunningham - J. Cunningham, The History of the Church of Scotland.
- Dexter - ~~The~~ Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years
- Eccl. Records of Aberdeen - Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery Synod of Aberdeen
- Fletcher, J. Fletcher. - History of the Revival & Progress of Independency in England.
- Hanbury: B. Hanbury's Historical Memorials of Independency
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- Lamont - John Lamont - Diary
- Martin, -A.D. Martin, The Principle of the Congregational Church
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- Owen - W. Orme, Memoirs of the Life, Writings & Religious Connexion of John Owen, D.D.
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- Ross: J. Ross ^{History} ^{Congregational} "A Study of Independence in Scotland"
- Scot. & Comm: Scotland and the Commonwealth ed. C.H. Firth
- Scot & Protectorate - Scotland and the Protectorate ed. C.H. Firth
- Selbie - W.B. Selbie, Congregationalism
- Somerville - T. Somerville, Own Life & Times
- Spalding: J. Spalding, Memorials of the Trubles in Scotland.
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I. THE FIRST TRACES OF CONGREGATIONALISM IN SCOTLAND.

The oldest of the Congregational Churches at present existing in Scotland proudly trace their history back to the wave of spiritual life that swept the country during the closing years of the Eighteenth Century and to the great Evangelical movement of that period with which the names of Robert and James Haldane are appropriately associated. Congregationalism in Scotland, however, did not originate with the brothers Haldane. Any study of its origins must begin much earlier, for quite two hundred years before (in 1584) the Congregational Faith⁽¹⁾ was expounded to a Scottish audience, and although - as some contend - no appreciable footing may have been gained then or till long after, yet from time to time during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries Congregationalism did make frequent appearances in Scotland.

It has, of course, been claimed that the Reformation Churches of Scotland during the first three years of their history were Independent and Congregational - at any rate so far as polity was concerned; that only with the appearance of the Second Book of Discipline in 1581 did they become definitely and pronouncedly Presbyterian.⁽²⁾ "It seemed at first as though the (Reformation) movement would proceed upon Congregational lines",⁽³⁾ another writer contends. But an impartial study of the Scots Confession and the First Book of Discipline/

(1) Calderwood IV. p. 1.

(2) Ross pp. 6, 9.

(3) Martin p. 70

Discipline, in which the faith of Knox and his fellow reformers is set forth, and which last was the Standard of the Reformed Church for the first twenty years of its existence, gives little support to such a claim. In "The Confession of Faith professed and believed by the Protestants within the realm of Scotland", ratified by Parliament in Edinburgh, 17th August 1560, three notes of the true Kirk are clearly stated. These notes are "first, the true preaching of the word of God secondly, the right administration of the Sacraments lastly, ecclesiastical discipline uprightly administered, as God's word prescribes whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished". It is added, - "Wheresoever then these former notes are seen, and if any time continue, be the number never so few above two or three, there, without all doubt, is the true Kirk of Christ, who, according to His promise, is in the midst of them"⁽⁴⁾ "That", according to one writer "so far as it goes, is Congregationalism";⁽⁵⁾ but it does not go far enough to claim it as such, for while what may be called the functions of the Church are enumerated, nothing is said about the Christian standing and calling of those who compose the Church, upon which Congregationalism lays such stress. H. Barrowe, whose contribution to the foundation literature of English Separatism ranks in importance next after that of Browne, deals with this issue. In his "A Briefe Discoverie of the False Church" Barrowe is very outspoken in his antagonism to Calvin's doctrines, to which Knox and his contemporaries/

(4) Scots Confession Cap. XVIII.

(5) Martin p. 70.

-aries so closely adhered. Neither ministry nor sacraments according to Barrowe, are of the essence of the Church, though they are of its excellence. The teaching of the word soundly does not, of necessity, constitute a Church. It may lead to the foundation of a Church, which is a fellowship of those who, being instructed, live in the obedience of God.⁽⁶⁾

Moreover, in their interpretation of at least one of the notes of the true Kirk, that of discipline, the Scottish Reformers were far from the Congregational position. To Knox and his colleagues discipline did not exactly imply what it did to the Separatists,- that the Church as a body inside the nation should be able to cast out from her membership and privileges those whose conduct was scandalous.⁽⁷⁾ Rather did it imply to the Scottish Reformers,- that the Church as co-extensive with the nation should deal with offences that the magistrate could or would not punish, and that ultimately by ex-communication, a terrible penalty making its victim an outcast from social life.⁽⁸⁾

Such difference of interpretation was possible only because the Scottish Reformers held one view of the Church and their Congregational contemporaries, the Separatists, quite another. The latter held that the rightly constituted Church must be composed of believers alone, was a company of people called and separated from the world by the word of God, and joined together in a voluntary profession of faith. Browne e.g. declares that/

(6) "A Briefe Discoverie" p. 34

(7) R. Browne: "A Booke which Sheweth" Def. 48

(8) First Book of Discipline cap. IX. 2, 3.

that a preaching minister is not necessary to a Church, but that two or three agreeing together in the truth and keeping separate from the wicked in their meetings constitute a Church. (9) Knox and his fellow reformers recognised, like the Separatists, only genuine believers as true members of the Church; but then this Church, of which only the faithful are members, was not with them the visible but the invisible Church, the members of which are known only to God. (10) In the visible Church they had no hope of that purity of membership after which the Separatists strove. "We acknowledge and confess that darnel, cockle and chaff may be sown, grow and in great abundance lie in the midst of the wheat." (11) Barrowe's simile of the Church as the sheepfold, sedulously guarded, a planted vineyard walled round, would have been from their point of view false; to them truer far ^{was} that of the Church as the "Barnefflore" in which the grains of wheat are hidden among the chaff, until it be purified by the fan and the sieve. (12) The Scottish Reformers' idea of the local and visible Kirk was not the Separatists' - of a gathered Church of the worthiest, of which none can be members but such as be regenerate so far as the Church can discern. Their thought was of a Church of which preaching, sacraments, discipline rightly maintained, were the pledges of its existence, and which consisted of all baptised persons who were not excommunicate and of whose Christianity was required only such negative evidence as might be afforded in religious knowledge and in the absence/

(9) R. Browne: "An Answer to Master Cartwright" pp. 11, 13.

(10) Scots Confession Cap. XVI.

(11) Scots Confession cap. XXV.

(12) A Briefe Discoverie p. 17.

absence of scandalous conduct. The Kirk to them was not a company, a fellowship of people called ^{"of"} the separated from the world; every parishioner had his place in its membership and was subject to its discipline; Kirk and nation were identified. That such were the views of Knox and his co-workers the Scots Confession and the First Book of Discipline leave us in no doubt. How then it can be said that "it seemed at first as though the (Reformation) movement would proceed upon Congregational lines?" Knox had been too completely influenced by Calvin and looked on life, on duty, on doctrine, on the Church too much from Calvin's point of view for anything like that to happen. (cp. Knox's Eulogy of Geneva in 1556: "....This place, whair I neither feir nor escheme to say is the maist perfyt schoole of Chryst that was ever in erth since the dayis of the Apostillis"⁽¹³⁾). The Scots Confession so clearly shows Calvin's influence upon Knox and his co-workers and so borrows from Calvin's "Institutes" at every point as to warn one against any such supposition.

But it may be asked what of the polity of the Reformation Churches during that early period, of the claim that they were Congregational so far as polity was concerned, each congregation being virtually independent and held to be fully competent to manage its own affairs?⁽¹⁴⁾ The small number of ministers in these early years, it must be admitted, forbade the establishment of the graduated system of Church Courts which soon came to be the strength/

(13) Knox's Works iii p. 235

(14) Ross pp. 3,4.

strength and mark of Presbyterianism. Indeed it was in Scotland at this time, and contemporaneously in France, that the polity which was framed in the City of Geneva came to be developed into a system adapted to a National Church. But at least the rudiments of all these courts were there in 1560, and in the First Book of Discipline an outline of a government of the Church by such courts is given, though the modern names are not used, and the whole scheme undoubtedly is vague and shadowy. The constitution of the Scottish reformed Church of 1560 did lay down - admittedly more in the nature of a sketch than of a finished picture, but still it did lay down - essential principles of Presbyterian Church government.⁽¹⁵⁾

By those who claim that the early Reformation Churches were Congregational in their polity⁽¹⁶⁾ much is made of the fact that "it appertaineth to the people⁽¹⁷⁾ and to every congregation to elect their minister" - a privilege and duty for which the English Separatists strongly contended. But it must be remembered that it is distinctly laid down in the next sentence of the First Book of the Discipline that should any congregation neglect to do so, "the best reformed Kirk, to wit, the Church of the Superintendent with his Council, may present unto them a man whom they judge apt to feed the flock of Christ Jesus"⁽¹⁸⁾. Such a step, of course, is in accord with Presbyterian but certainly not in accord with Congregational procedure. Further according to the/

(15) J.G. McGregor, Scottish Presbyterian Polity p.163.

(16) Ross p. 4: Martin p. 70.

(17) First Book of Discipline Cap. IV. I.

(18) First Book of Discipline Cap. IV.

the First Book of Discipline, "ordinary vocation consisteth in election, examination and admission"⁽¹⁹⁾. The Congregation had the right to elect its minister, but before the individual elected could take up the charge, he had to be examined as to doctrine and life, and knowledge, and his power to preach by "the learned ministers and next reformed Kirk"⁽²⁰⁾. Should he "be judged unable for the regiment by the learned," the people's election was null and void⁽²¹⁾ for admission must consist "in consent of the people and Kirk whereto they (i.e. ministers) shall be appointed, and in approbation of the learned ministers appointed for their examination"⁽²²⁾.

There were then from the first in the Reformation Churches two parties to the settlement of a minister; the congregation who called him, and an outside authority who approved of the person called and without whose approbation the settlement could not take place. Such Churches can hardly be described as "Independent and Congregational"⁽²³⁾. The Congregational Faith is that every Church is spiritually independent of every other, that every Church, by virtue of the presence of Christ in it, has the right to choose its own officers, and that no ecclesiastical court or assembly outside of itself is warranted to wield authority over it. Such Churches the early Reformation Churches of Scotland were not and were never intended to be. Proof thereof is to be found, as has just been indicated, in the conditions with which the settlement of a minister was hedged/

(19) First Book of Discipline Cap. IV.

(20) Do.

(21) Do.

(22) Do.

(23) Ross p. 6.

hedged about. Similar external sanction had to be sought for his removal, for it is clearly stated that "the whole Kirk, or the most part thereof, for just considerations, may transfer a minister from one Kirk to another" but "he must not at his pleasure leave the flock nor may the flock reject nor change him at their appetite", unless they be able to convict him of such crimes as deserve deposition.⁽²⁴⁾ Further proof of the non-congregational character of the churches of the Reformation is forthcoming in the fact that as early as December 1560 a General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland met in Edinburgh, constituted of six ministers and thirty five laymen as "ministers and commissioners of the particular Kirkes of Scotland", and proceeded to legislate for the internal affairs of the Church;⁽²⁵⁾ that as early as the General Assembly of June 1562 the formal style of authority was used -⁽²⁶⁾ ✓ "The haill Kirk appoints and decerns"; that the subsequent assembly (Dec. 1562) erected provincial Synods, to meet regularly twice a year with power to translate⁽²⁷⁾ as well as appoint ministers. In the face of such evidence any claim that Knox and his colleagues intended the Scottish Churches at the Reformation to be Congregational in character and polity, and that it was probably the influence of Knox's political allies⁽²⁸⁾ which occasioned the abandonment of such an ideal is unwarranted. In those productions of Knox and his colleagues, "The Scots Confession" and "The First

Book/

(24) First Book of Discipline cap. IV.

(25) B.U.K. p. 1.

(26) B.U.K. p.10

(27) Ibid p.12

(28) Martin p. 71: Ross p. 23.

"Book of Discipline", there are to be found unsettled points and open questions as to the ideal of Church government, but the most important features which have distinguished Scottish Presbyterianism are already there in 1560.

We hold, therefore, that Congregationalism entered Scotland not in the first flush of the Reformation, but some twenty years later when the war between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism^{was} being waged; and for its introduction then, in 1583-4, the Scots clergy were not responsible - it came unsought and undesired - but an English refugee - Robert Browne who is generally credited with being the founder of Congregationalism in England, and after whom the Congregationalists were at first known as "Brownists". R. Browne was born circa 1550, graduated at Cambridge in 1572,⁽²⁹⁾ and then turned to teaching for some time.⁽³⁰⁾ He was much concerned about the religious condition of the people and the conclusion he reached was that "the cause of all" was "the woful and lamentable state of the Church". He determined to go to the root of things; He "wholly bent himselfe to search and find out the matters of the Church, how the church was to be guided and ordered".⁽³¹⁾ The plague breaking out he gave up his school and went home to his father's house.⁽³²⁾ But the burden of the Church of God was upon him and he could not rest. He returned to the University and became one of a group of young men who took counsel with Richard Greenham, the Puritan minister of Dry Drayton, near Cambridge.⁽³³⁾ Greenham allowed Browne to "teach openly" in his parish, which he did so acceptably/

(29) ~~Next~~ p. 64 Note (18)

(30) R. Browne "A True & Short Declaration (Reprint)p.1.

(31) Ibid p. 2.

(32) Ibid p. 2.

(33) Ibid p. 2.

ably that he was invited to preach in Cambridge. To regularise the proceeding a Bishop's licence was procured, but Browne refused to use it.⁽³⁴⁾ This naturally led to trouble and eventually to a promise being extracted from Browne that he would no longer preach in Cambridge.⁽³⁵⁾ Sometime in 1580, therefore, he removed to Norfolk where he had heard there were those who were "verie forward" in the reform of religion, and took up his abode with his friend, Robert Harrison.⁽³⁶⁾ Browne, having realised that something more radical than a mere reformation of the Church of England was necessary to restore the New Testament purity and simplicity, had before this abandoned the Puritan position. In Cambridge his message had been distinctly Congregational, for "he judged that the Kingdom of God was not to be begun by whole parishes, but rather off the worthiest, were they never so few".⁽³⁷⁾ In Norwich he came into touch with Dutch immigrants, some of whom at least were Anabaptists.⁽³⁸⁾ It may be that under their influence he became confirmed in his opinion that there could be no middle way of reformation, that the Church of England was spiritually impossible and no mere Presbyterianising of the Church could remove the radical conflict with the New Testament ideals. Be that as it may, - and there are those that think that Browne was considerably influenced by the Anabaptists,⁽³⁹⁾ - he now set himself to propagate the views which he was soon to give to the world in his two classical works, "Reformation without tarying for Anie" and "A Booke which sheweth the life and manner of all true Christians". He gathered

✓ Powicks
see Robert
Browne
p 28

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(34) Ibid p.6.

(35) Ibid p.7. g

(36) Ibid pp. 7, -9.

(37) Ibid p.6.

(38) Hanbury I. p.19

(39) Real - Encyklopadie 3 III p. 426.

a company of like-minded men and women and bound them under covenant to refuse all⁽⁴⁰⁾godly communion with wicked persons. This, according to Dexter, was the "first Church in modern days which was intelligently, and one might say philosophically, Congregational in its platform and processes"⁽⁴¹⁾. Browne also went throughout Norfolk and Suffolk preaching and acting as an avowed Separatist,⁽⁴²⁾ and for this was imprisoned by the Bishop of Norwich. He was, however, soon released, probably owing to the⁽⁴³⁾ intervention of his kinsman Lord Burleigh, and resumed his missionary activities with such success that the Bishop of Norwich was constrained "most earnestly to crave his lordship's (Burleigh's) help in suppressing him (R.B.)⁽⁴⁴⁾ especially". In consequence of this fresh interference with his labours Browne thought it prudent to leave the country. He and his followers were agreed and fully⁽⁴⁵⁾ persuaded "that the Lord did call them out of England". Scotland by some was suggested as a possible refuge; but Browne himself was against the proposal, arguing that that Kingdom "framed itself in those matters to please England too much" and that "some corruption should come upon us from their parishes which we ought to avoid", and foreseeing also that they would not be far enough away from England to have any guarantee of the freedom that they⁽⁴⁶⁾ desired. Zealand was finally decided upon, and in the autumn of 1581 the majority of the members of the little Church at Norwich under the leadership of Harrison and Browne migrated in a body to Middleburg where they received permission of the authorities to worship God in their/

(40) Browne "A True & Short Declaration" pp. 19, 20.

(41) Dexter p. 70

(42) Lansdowne MSS XXXIII. 13; Dexter p.70

(43) Dexter p. 71.

(44) Lansdowne MSS XXXIII. 20; Dexter p.71.

(45) ~~that~~ Browne "A True & Short Declaration" p.21

(46) Ibid p.21.

See
Pounce-
id pp
30-31

(47)
 their own way. (Burrage in his "Early English Dissenters"
 maintains that some thirty to forty people at the most
 accompanied Browne across the sea and regards earlier
 statements about "fifty or sixty persons" as gross
 exaggerations⁽⁴⁷⁾). The next two years of Browne's life
 were spent there, but it was ^{an} unhappy time. The little
 company that met in Browne's house found the climate far
 from congenial and were "in very poor estate and for the
 most parte visited with sickness"⁽⁴⁸⁾; their leaders, Browne
 and Harrison, quarrelled, and they themselves were hope-
 lessly divided.⁽⁴⁹⁾ This period is of importance, however,
 for it was shortly after his arrival in Zealand that
 Browne's treatises already referred to, "Reformation
 without Tarying", and "A Booke which Sheweth", as also
 "A Treatise upon the 23 of Matthewe", in which he enum-
 erated the classical tenets of Separatism, were published
 by the Middleburg printer, Richard Schilders. In these
 we have all the essentials of later Congregationalism.
 Instead of a Church consisting of all baptised persons
 who were not excommunicate Browne would set up "gathered
 Churches" of men and women bound together by a willing
 covenant made with their God; where two or three believ-
 ers are united in fellowship, the bond being the common
 relation to Christ, there is a true Church; and the
 authorisation of such communities lies solely in the
 fact of Christ's presence among them and of His Spirit
 operating through them.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Every such gathered Church is
 spiritually independent of every other, though this does
 not mean these Churches need be isolated. They should
 establish/

(47) C. Burrage, "Early English Dissenters" I. pp.108,109.

C. Burrage, "True Story of R. Browne" pp.15 et seq: Ø

✓ (48) Darnet to Walsingham from Antwerp S.P. Eliz. Holl. an
 Bland xvii. 23.Scott-Pearson "Thos.Cartwright" p.215

(49) R. Browne "True And Short Declar" pp.21-22.

(50) "A Booke Which Sheweth" Def.35.

establish friendly relations with each other,- being one in Christ, they must be one with each other,- and may even set up councils for "redresse and deciding matters which cannot well be otherwise taken up"⁽⁵¹⁾. Each Church has, by virtue of the presence of Christ in it, the right to choose its own officers, and these have their several charge in one Church only, but this act of choice is not independent of the will of Christ, it is, indeed, the expression of His Will.⁽⁵²⁾ The Church that is to say, does not confer on its pastors and teachers and elders such authority as belongs to their office, it merely discovers to what persons "the office and message of God has been entrusted"⁽⁵³⁾ Discipline, or the separation of offenders by withholding from them Christian fellowship, is enforced as an important duty.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Such in broad outline was the new Church polity laid down by Robert Browne. It had existed, of course, in practice before Browne set forth its principles.⁽⁵⁵⁾ He, however, is deservedly regarded as the father, the founder of modern Congregationalism, for the Congregationalism of the separate groups of dissatisfied Anglican worshippers from 1567 onwards was not built around a principle, and there remained a certain accidental quality in their organisation. Browne's great contribution as has been well said, was "to demonstrate that the form of the Church, its democracy its liberty, its unofficial ministry, that all this is rooted in the substance of the Gospel itself".⁽⁵⁶⁾

At Middleburg by Browne and his colleague, Harrison, an attempt was made to organise such a Church as the/

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- (51) "A Booke which Sheweth" Def. 51.
 (52) Ibid, Defs. 52, 53.
 (53) Dale "Hist. of Eng. Congism" p. 128
 (54) "A Booke which Sheweth" Def. 48
 (55) Dale, Hist. of Eng. Congism" p. 62
 (56) W. Pierce "John Penry" p. 320.

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p 32

the former had advocated by which
that the Separatist company since
(57)
Cartwright's Congregation has now
Brownists were already settled in
English Church under Cartwright was
The Congregational experiment of Brown
however, was not a success; the little
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(59)
were in sore straits; besides, in their zeal
they instituted a searching scrutiny of each
faults which quickly caused dispeace, and
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(61)
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(62)
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(63) (64)
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not told of their "having gotten support there"
St. Andrews too, whither they had gone from
had/

(57) Heylyn "Aerins Redivivus" I. vii. 202
(58) Burrage's "Early English Dissenters" I. 100
(59) Vide Supra p. 12. Pearson "True Story of Robert Brown"
(60) Browne "True And Short Declaration" p. 21
(61) Ibid p. 23
(62) Ibid p. 24
(63) Dexter p. 76
(64) Burrage "True Story of Robert Brown"
(65) Calderwood IV. 100

the former had advocated by voice and pen. The suggestion that the Separatist company simply attached themselves to Cartwright's Congregation ⁽⁵⁷⁾ has now been disproved. The Brownists were already settled in Middleburg when the English Church under Cartwright was established there. ⁽⁵⁸⁾ The Congregational experiment of Browne and his followers, however, was not a success; the little Church did not prosper. Everything was against it; the members were suffering from the climate, and financially many of them ⁽⁵⁹⁾ were in sore straits; besides, in their zeal for purity they instituted a searching scrutiny of each other's faults which quickly caused dispeace, and eventually ⁽⁶⁰⁾ led to open railing, slander and divisions. Browne and Harrison quarrelled, were reconciled, then quarrelled ⁽⁶¹⁾ again. Things went from bad to worse until hope of reconciliation there was none. A parting was inevitable: Harrison remained with a handful in Middleburg and ministered to them till his death, and Browne with the few ⁽⁶²⁾ who clung to him, set sail for Scotland.

It was in the last months of 1583 that the departure from Zealand took place. "In November or December ⁽⁶³⁾ Dexter contends; Burrage ⁽⁶⁴⁾ suggests sometime in "the late autumn". Certainly very early in 1584 Browne, accompanied by four or five Englishmen and their wives and ⁽⁶⁵⁾ families, reached Edinburgh. They had landed at Dundee ^{been} and had/cordially received, at least by some. Are we ⁽⁶⁶⁾ not told of their "having gottin support there". At St. Andrews too, whither they had gone from Dundee, they had/

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- (57) Heylyn "Aerins Redivivus" lib. vii; 29: Selbie p.18
 (58) Burrage's "Early English Dissenters" I pp. 107-108
 (59) Vide Supra p. 12. ^{Scott Pearson} "Thos. Cartwright" pp. 215-216
 (60) Browne "True And Short Declar" p.21
 (61) Ibid p. 23
 (62) Ibid p. 24
 (63) Dexter p. 76
 (64) Burrage "True Story of Robert Browne" p.18
 (65) Calderwood IV.p.1.
 (66) Ibid. p.1.

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 see Ponder
 p 32

had not been without encouragement, for from Andrew Melville, Browne had procured a letter to one of the
 (67)
 Edinburgh Ministers, Mr James Lowsone. When, however, they reached the Capital and took up their residence "at the heid of the Cannogate", as they did on "Thursday the
 (68)
 9th January, their experience was somewhat different; they soon found that the Kirk of Scotland was as intolerant and as ready to persecute as the Church of England. Browne seems to have lost no time in proceeding to proclaim his principles, of which Calderwood presents us with this summary " They held opinioun of Separatioun from all Kirks where ex-communicatioun was not rigorously used against open offenders not repenting". They would not admit witnesses in baptisme; and sindrie other opiniouns
 (69)
 they had".

With Browne and his views the Edinburgh ecclesiasticks of that day had no sympathy, and action was taken without delay to prevent him spreading his doctrines. On Tuesday 14th January, less than a week after his arrival, Browne was on his defence before the Session of the Kirk of Edinburgh.
 (70)
 On the following Tuesday, 21st January, he was
 (71)
 examined by the Presbytery. The attitude which he took up before the latter Court, "that the whole discipline of Scotland was amisse, that he and his Companie were not subject to it", and his appeal on that ground from the
 (72)
 Kirk to the Magistrate did not make his Presbyterian critics more kindly disposed towards him. On the contrary, it seems to have made them more determined to prevent further opportunity being afforded him for

promulgating/

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- (67) Ibid p. 1.
 - (68) Ibid p. 1.
 - (68) Ibid p.1.
 - (70) Ibid p. 1.
 - (71) Ibid p. 2
 - (72) Ibid p. 2.

promulgating his beliefs. Browne was not allowed to
 continue in his lodgings but was committed to prison.

had 50
 after the
 28th

This imprisonment Browne keenly resented. "In Scotland",
 he says, "the preachers having no names of byshops did
 imprison me more wrongfully than anie Bishop would have
 done"; While he was ~~he was~~ thus kept from spreading false
 doctrine Mr James Lowsone and Mr Johne Davidsons by the
 order of the Presbytery examined his writings and enquired
 into the practices of the Brownists with a view to be
 ready "against Moonday nixt" with a list of his heresies,
 "to pose him and his followers thereupon, that thereafter
 the King might be informed". A week later - Tuesday 28th
 January, (not the 20th as stated by Ross), Browne was summon-
 -ed before the Presbytery "with the rest of his complices"
 and "continued till the morne". Without hesitation he
 acknowledged his writings and his readiness to defend the
 same. The two ministers who had been commissioned to
 examine his writings were thereupon appointed to gather
 the erroneous articles "for presentation to the King".
 That this duty they discharged, and that an account of
 Browne's heresies was presented to his Majesty is nowhere
 definitely stated but it may legitimately be inferred, for
 Calderwood's record of Browne's case abruptly ends with
 this sentence: "But they (the Brownists) were interteaned
 and fostered to molest the Kirk". We take it we are there-
 from to understand that the indictment of Browne, though
 made, failed; the anticipated condemnation by the Court
 did not materialise; but instead from that quarter Browne

received/

(73) "A New Year's Gift" p. 27: Calderwood V. p.6

(74) Calderwood IV. p. 2

(75) Ross p. 16

(76) Calderwood IV. p. 2.

(77) Ibid p. 2.

received protection, and even encouragement, because at
 the moment it so suited the royal convenience. (78)

See
 Powicke
 p 38
 Hanbury because of this favouring of Browne by
 the Court concludes that "he was acting covertly in
 subserviency to the courtiers against the dominant Divines" (79)

The facts do not warrant such a conclusion. King James
 couples Browne with Pentry who was not suspected of any
 such subserviency and speaks of both as coming into Scot-
 land "to sow their popple amongst us". (80) Moreover Brown-
 ism was as unacceptable to the Scottish Presbyterians as
 to the English Puritans. The Scottish Divines with their
 singularly high conception of the unity of the Church
 detested Separatism; Browne they regarded as a schismatic
 and a malcontent, (81) and their attitude towards him was,
 and only could be, one of opposition and hostility. Browne
 on his part had as little liking for Presbyterianism as
 for Episcopacy and of the Scottish Clergy had but a poor
 opinion, as a later writing reveals. (82) Just because the
 Church was opposed to Browne and he opposed to the Church,
 the Court party might well be favourably disposed towards
 the English refugee, for at this period relations between
 Church and State in Scotland were strained, and were
 destined to become more so. Browne had arrived in
 Edinburgh at a time of considerable excitement. James
 had neither forgotten nor forgiven the approval of the
 recent Raid of Ruthven by the ministers, who had hailed
 it as the deliverance of the Church from an evil bondage,
 and who still persisted in justifying it. For his out-
 spokenness John Durie, one of the Edinburgh Ministers,
 was/

(78) McCries "Life of Melville" Vol. I. p.325

(79) Hanbury I. p. 22

(80) Introduction to Basilikon Doron Works (1616) 143

(81) Calderwood V. p.6.

(82) R. Browne "A New Year's Gift" pp. 25-26.

was banished to Montrose towards the end of December 1583, about the very time Browne and his followers set foot in Scotland.⁽⁸³⁾ In the following February Melville had been summoned before the Privy Council to answer for certain treasonable speeches alleged to have been delivered in a sermon of his and, fearing the consequences, had fled to Berwick.⁽⁸⁴⁾ Those Acts of Parliament also, known amongst the people as "the Black Acts" - which decreed, inter alia, that no ecclesiastical assembly should be held without the King's consent, that a refusal to follow the counsel of the King and the Privy Council should be punished as treason, and that all ministers were to acknowledge the superiority of Bishops⁽⁸⁵⁾ - were passed about the same time. It is not difficult to understand how in such a situation the courtiers might welcome Browne and encourage him to act as a thorn in the side of the Church, and his release was in all probability part of the royal policy to embarrass and harass the Church. Browne may have been used as a tool by the Court party for the accomplishment of their purposes against the Church, but that he willingly, consciously and deliberately allowed himself to be so used,⁽⁸⁶⁾ as Hanbury suggests, is a supposition that there is not a tittle of evidence to support.

It has been claimed that Browne stayed in Scotland "for about a year",⁽⁸⁷⁾ but this is an exaggeration. A letter from Lord Burleigh to the Archbishop of Canterbury of July 17th 1584 indicates that at that date his Kinsman had returned to England.⁽⁸⁸⁾ For some months/

(83) Calderwood III pp. 762-764

(84) Calderwood IV. pp. 3 et seq.

(85) Calderwood IV. pp. 63-64

(86) Hanbury I. p.22

(87) Selbie p. 21.

(88) Dexter pp. 79-80.

months, however, Browne, it would appear, remained in Scotland. He himself claimed to have travelled extensively over the Country and to have studied Presbyterianism at first hand in the "best reformed places as in Dunde, Sct. Andrewes, Edenborowe, and sundrie other townes"⁽⁸⁹⁾. One cannot imagine that he was silent as to his own beliefs or that he hesitated to attempt to convert to them the Scots he encountered, but there is no record of any success in this connection. The time was plainly an evil one for missionary purposes. The Scots were in no mood to welcome the new faith. Presbyterianism had by this time become closely identified with the religious life of the Scottish people, but the Court and all under its influence did not like it, and at the moment, as we have seen, it was fighting strenuously for its existence. Browne's own testimony was that when "he came away, all the whole land was in a manner divided into parts, much people in armes and redie to ioine battel, some with the King and some against him and all about the preachers discipline"⁽⁹⁰⁾. In such circumstances any attempt to establish Independency was doomed to failure. That Browne should have succeeded in converting to his Separatist Faith a staunchly Presbyterian people even while they were resisting the imposition of Episcopacy, was hardly to be expected, and his utter lack of success need occasion no surprise.

One further link of the founder of modern Congregationalism with the religious life of Scotland deserves notice. With English Separatists like Browne the/

(89) R. Browne "A New Year's Guift" p. 25.

(90) Ibid p. 26.

the Scottish Presbyterians had no patience, but with his Puritan compatriots they had warm sympathy. The adherence of the latter to Presbyterian principles makes this understandable. When, therefore, the Puritans were persecuted for their religious beliefs, the Scottish Churchmen took their side against their persecutors, the English Bishops, to the annoyance of Queen Elizabeth; and this resentment against the English prelates was intensified by the intrigues carried on between these prelates and Scottish favourers of an Episcopate. This estrangement between the two National Churches, it is generally agreed, was deepened by Bancroft's famous sermon at St. Paul's Cross on the 9th of February 1588, the effects of which did not pass away for many years. In this sermon the future Archbishop made a direct and savage attack against Scottish Presbyterianism and particularly against its anti-monarchical character. He abused John Knox as a man of a contentious nature and perverse behaviour; he abused the Scottish Church Courts as laboratories of treason; and he praised the King for having put them down. Now Bancroft used - and this is what concerns us here - as a source of information two writings of Robert Browne, one a treatise against Barrowe and the other a letter sent by Browne to his Uncle Flower, dated 31st December 1588. In this letter Browne writes scathingly of the Scottish and other Presbyterians and holds that if their system were adopted in England, "then instead of one Pope we should have a thousand and of some Lord Bishops in name, a thousand Lordly Tyrants indeed, which/

(91) B.U.K. II p. 749; Calderwood V. p.88

(92) Calderwood V. p.121

(93) Edited under the title "A New Year's Gift" by C. Burrage (1904).

which now do disdain the name". He wants it to be understood that he is not indolge in mere surmise. In his own experience he has found it to be "trewe both in ferreine contries and in myne owne contrie. I can testify"- he goes on - "by trial of Scotland which have traveled in ouer in their best reformed places and have known the King in great daunger and feare of his lyfe by their Lordlie Discipline, the nobles and people at great discord and much distracted, and yet all men made slaves to the preachers and their fellowe elders. So that myne owne ears have hard the King by name to be verie spitefully abused by their preachers in pulpitt, his doings and commandments called in, revoked or repealed, or els established and performed as he durst or could do for feare or daunger of them. Also in euerie Towne I found the chiefe Magistrate in awe of them, much murmuring, grudging and whispering conspiracies to be made on all hands Further I have sene all manner of wickedness to abound much more in their best places in Scotland than in our worser places here in England". Such first hand information was from Bancroft's point of view of considerable importance; therefore, of these reminiscences of Browne's sojourn in Scotland he eagerly availed himself. His "inconstant Countryman" was cited as one of his principal witnesses and quoted at length.

The attack, as was to be expected, provoked antagonism. The Scottish Ministers were indignant at/

(94) Ibid p. 25

(95) Ibid pp. 25-26

~~(96) - Calderwood V. - p. 76~~

the
at/asperions cast on them. Johne Davidsons on their
behalf drafted a vigorous protest to Elizabeth request-
ing that Bancroft "with his complices may be
corrected for their most injurious dealings against
(96)
us. The letter for politic reasons was held back,
but a short and vigorous retaliation from the same
writer entitled "D. Bancroft's Rashnes in Rayling
against the Church of Scotland" was printed and circu-
lated shortly afterwards. Bancroft is pilloried
there as "that poore Demas if he be no worse", and
Browne is contemptuously described as "his inconstant
(97)
Countryman". The intention, of course, is to dis-
credit Browne as Bancroft's witness, but it is apparent
how strongly his allegations are resented, especially
the assertion that James is in danger or fear of his
life by "their Lordlie Discipline". (98) It would seem
then that Browne's visit to Scotland was not without
result, although not such result as he had perhaps
looked for. He did not apparently win a single Scot
of that day to Congregationalism, but he did help to
embitter some of them against Episcopacy. The bad
feeling that was so long and so ruinously to prevail
between the National Churches of Scotland and England
had begun before Bancroft's famous sermon was preached
and published. The discourse in question, however,
did strengthen and intensify the mutual jealousy and
bitterness and helped to widen the breach. In that
Browne, as one of Bancroft's principal witnesses, re-
calling/

(96) Calderwood V. p.76

(97) Rashnes in Rayling A 7 V -A.8.

(98) Ibid A.8.V. - B.1.

calling what he had seen and heard and suffered in Scotland, indirectly but certainly had a part.

II. JOHN PENRY IN SCOTLAND.

Some five years after Browne's sojourn in Scotland, in 1589, John Penry, whose devotion to Separatism later cost him his life, fled from his persecutors across the Border and for a time found a refuge in Edinburgh. Ross acknowledges that "there is no record of any movement in favour of Independency having been initiated" by Penry while here, but he surmises that 'so bold and earnest a champion of the "Congregational way" was not silent during his residence in Scotland.'⁽¹⁾ Are we, however, entitled to think thus of Penry - as carrying on the work that Browne had begun in Scotland? Have we any right to regard the Welsh martyr, as Ross and others obviously regard him, as the second Congregational Missionary to these Northern parts? Let us examine such facts as we have concerning the length of Penry's stay in Scotland and his ecclesiastical outlook about that period to see how far such an assumption is warranted.

Ross claims that Penry "remained during some four years in Scotland from 1589 to 1592".⁽²⁾ Earlier Writers, e.g. Neal, Fletcher, put the return to London slightly later, - early in 1593, but in this they err for there is incontrovertible evidence that he was in London - at all events in November 1592.⁽³⁾ T. Gasquoine, in an early volume of the Congregational Historical Society's Transactions,⁽⁴⁾ questions the accuracy of both these dates and suggests/

(1) Ross pp. 16-17.

(2) Ibid p. 16

(3) Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans. III p. 182

(4) Ibid pp. 182 et. seq.

suggests that "Penry's quiet rest in Scotland has to be shortened in our estimation by two years." The exile in Scotland lasted only till December 1590 according to this writer; thereafter we are to think of Penry as hiding "in different parts of England having ever closer fellowship with the scattered brethren of the separation, till in the autumn of 1592 he was prepared for full fellowship with them".⁽⁵⁾

The main support for this interesting conjecture its propounder finds in the letter written from "close prison", "this 10th of 4th mth. of Ap. 1593", by Penry to his four daughters who are exhorted to be kind "unto all strangers and unto the people of Scotland, where I, your mother, and a couple of you lived as strangers, yet were welcome and found great kindness in the name of our God". Earlier in the same letter we read; "the eldest of you is not yet four years old, and the youngest not yet four months". It follows, therefore, that the youngest was born shortly before Christmas 1592 and the eldest not earlier than April 1589 and would thus be an infant in arms when her parents took their flight into Scotland. That being so, it would seem tolerably certain that the second child was born in 1590; the third in 1591 or at the latest early in 1592. In the autumn of 1592 therefore, when the Scottish sojourn of the Penrys is generally regarded as having terminated, three of their four children had been born, but Penry himself speaks/

(5) Ibid p. 186.

speaks definitely of only two having been in Scotland. Mr Gasquoine contends that this proves the generally accepted view to be wrong; the two children who had been in Scotland were the eldest who had come as a baby and the second eldest who was born during the year her parents found a refuge in Edinburgh: Therefore the return to England must be ante-dated to the end of 1590. He argues that Penry's statement in the course of his examination before Mr Justice Young (April 5th 1593) that "he came out of Scotland about September last"⁽⁶⁾ does not invalidate such a view, and explains it as referring to a visit "probably a brief one" after what he "would venture to call the definite return of December 1590."⁽⁷⁾ Now, if the contention of this writer be correct that John Penry's stay in Scotland was very much shorter than has generally been believed, and further that it was only after his return that he entered into fellowship with the scattered Separatist brethren, then Ross has no right to present him as the second Congregational Missionary to these Northern parts and the Welshman's failure to initiate any movement in favour of Independency during his sojourn here is easily explained.⁽⁸⁾ Penry on this reckoning had not then himself reached the Independent position; he was still a Presbyterian. His sympathies were with Thomas Cartwright and his disciples rather than with Robert Browne and his followers.

We do not deny the attractiveness of Mr Gasquoine's theory. It throws light on much else besides Penry's inactivity/

(6) Pierce "John Penry" p. 398

(7) Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans. III. p. 186

(8) Ross pp. 16-17.

inactivity as a Congregational propagandist whilst in Scotland. It explains to some extent the smallness of his literary output during the years 1591-1592; and it also makes understandable what according to the other view is at first sight somewhat surprising - his sudden action in joining the Separatists in London after long fellowship with Presbyterianism in Scotland. On the other hand we must remember that Pierce, the author of our best work on the life and writings of the Welsh Reformer, in a subsequent volume of the Congregational Historical Society Transactions (9) examined the Gasquoine theory and rejected it. He disagrees with the assumption that the two children whom Penry speaks of having been in Scotland with their mother and himself were the eldest two. Pierce argues that it is the second and the third members of the family that are referred to, both of whom were born after the flight in 1589, and both of whom, if the generally accepted view be correct, must have been born in Scotland. But where was the eldest child and why was she not with her parents? Pierce suggests that she was left at her mother's home where she had been born, in charge of her grandparents. (10) In support of this hypothesis he refers to Mrs Penry's delicate health when she felt it her duty to undertake the journey to Scotland. In her weak condition the ^ycase of a baby would have added enormously to her burden. What then more natural than that she should leave it to the care of her parents? Pierce in further confirmation of this view cites a reference by Bowes, the English Ambassador, to Penry/

(9) Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans. ~~IV~~. pp. 379 et. seq.

(10) Ibid p. 384.

Penry and his wife under date of December 18th 1590. Bowes reports to London that he had been informed of "persons very honest" that Penry had left ~~in~~ Scotland, and then he adds the interesting information that "his wife contineweth in the Towne supported by the benevolence of his friends here."⁽¹¹⁾ The point to observe is that Bowes makes no mention of a child. That silence is capable of various interpretations. It may be said that there was a child in Edinburgh at this time but Bowes did not know of its presence. That such was the case is hard to believe, Edinburgh in 1590 being a comparatively small community. Or it may be said that Bowes knew that the child had come hither with its parents, but did not think it worth while to mention the fact in his report to Burleigh. This too is hard to believe if one considers the detailed nature of the statements the English Ambassador is wont to submit. The third and inevitable conclusion would seem to be that put forward by Pierce that the child was not mentioned because it was not there, having been left behind when its parents fled northward.⁽¹²⁾ It would, therefore, be two younger children who with their parents found shelter and much kindness in Scotland. In that case the main support for the Gasquoine theory goes and Penry's stay in Scotland did not terminate, as it seeks to make out, towards the end of 1590.

It cannot, of course, be questioned that on Thursday August 6th 1590 by "The King's Majestie with the advice of the Lordis of his Secreit Counsall"⁽¹³⁾ a writ of Banishment/

(11) Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans. IV. p. 382: S.P. Scot. Eliz. 1590 73.

(12) Ibid p. 384

(13) Reg. of Priv. Council of Scot. IV. 517: Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans. IV. p. 381.

Banishment was issued under which Penry was charged to depart within 10 days. There is, however, evidence in the correspondence of Bowes that the English Government from information which had reached them were of the opinion that the effects of the writ had been evaded and that Penry was still in Scotland. Thus under date of November 20th 1590 Bowes writes that he had duly informed the King that "it was merveiled in England" that Penry should be suffered to remain in Scotland, and that he had urged His Majesty to carry out the Order of banishment, but both the King and his Chancellor disavow any knowledge of Penry, having been "credibly informed that he was departed".⁽¹⁴⁾ A month later under date of December 18th there is a further reference to Penry in which Bowes re-affirms the royal belief that the Reformer had departed.⁽¹⁵⁾ There is also in the earlier communication a hint as to how the ministers of the Church of Scotland regarded the writ of banishment issued against Penry: "sundry ministers have Mrueiled to behold the earnestness of my course herein, and left my company for the same". He, therefore, thinks it unwise to alienate all the rest, for that would mean alienating the nobility as well, who have "no little regard to the course of the ministry".⁽¹⁶⁾ We gather from these observations that the ministers were on Penry's side and were prepared to boycott Bowes if he were over zealous in getting the decree of banishment executed, and that the nobility had such regard for the ministry that they would in all probability follow their example. In such circumstances/

(14) S.P. Scot. Eliz. 1590 46-44: Cong. Hist. Soc. IV. p.381

(15) Ibid 1590 73: do. IV. p. 385

(16) Ibid 1590 14: do. IV. p.382.

circumstances Penry's tarrying in Scotland, even though a writ of banishment had been issued against him, would be neither impossible nor improbable. It is clear that the clergy meant to shield him against the operations of the decree of expulsion, and that they did so until he finally returned to London in the autumn of 1592 we are not altogether without proof. We have Penry's own statement at his trial, that to evangelise the people of Wales he had returned from Scotland where he might have stayed "prively" the rest of his life.⁽¹⁷⁾ There is also the deposition of John Edwards concerning his journey from Scotland in company with Penry, who, he says, "was not banished out of Scotland but there was Banishment against him and the mynisters ever stay the proclaiming thereof".⁽¹⁸⁾ The testimony is incorrect in form (Edwards was but imperfectly acquainted with the inwardness of the events about which he was led to speak), yet it is in accord with the earlier admission of Bowes and explains how Penry in spite of the decree of August 6th 1590 was able to remain in Scotland to the Autumn of 1592. This view is further confirmed by the date of two letters by Penry published in the "Sixt Addition" of Ephraim (and) Pagitt's "Heresiography", London 1661, pp. 271-275. The first was "written from Edinburgh in Scotland, Apr. 30, In 34th of the Queen (i.e. 1592)", and the second was "written also from Edinburgh in Scotland, March 1. In 33rd of the Queen (i.e. 1591)". The dates of these letters entirely invalidate Mr Gasquoine's theory.⁽¹⁹⁾

It is not maintained that Penry never paid a visit to his English sympathisers during this period. From Cosin and/

(17) W. Pierce, "John Penry" p. 425

(18) Early English Dissenters II. pp. 57-58: Cong. Hist. Soc. Trans. IV. p. 382.

(19) Early English Dissenters I. p. 151.

and later from Bancroft we hear that he secretly visited
 (20)
 London. What may be regarded as established from several
 sources is that Penry was in Scotland for a considerable
 period of time, that Scotland was his general residence
 from the closing months of 1589 to the autumn of 1592.

How are we to think of Penry during these years
 of his sojourn in Edinburgh? Are we, with Ross, to regard
 him as a bold and earnest champion of the "Congregational
 (21)
 way", Browne's successor as the expositor of Separatism
 to Scottish Presbyterians? It is now for us to consider
 such facts as we can glean concerning Penry's ecclesiastical
 outlook about this period that we may decide whether such
 a view is tenable. There is, of course, no question that
 on his return from Scotland in 1592 Penry did cast in his
 lot with the Separatist Company of which Greenwood was
 teacher, and that, although he refused office, he entered
 enthusiastically into the life and fellowship of their
 (22)
 Church. It is, however, equally beyond question, that
 Penry was not one of the brethren of the separation but a
 Puritan, or more correctly a Presbyterian when he fled to
 Scotland in 1589. His views on the nature of the Church,
 on questions of Church polity and government are abundantly
 illustrated by the writings that came from his pen up to
 that time. Unmistakeably they reveal him with certain
 views on Church order and the sacraments largely peculiar
 to himself, yet in the main in accord with Presbyterians
 like Thos. Cartwright rather than with Separatists like
 Robert Browne. Indeed so little sympathy had he with the
 latter that it had been claimed for him that he had been
 "a means to reclaime and cal back some that for want of

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(20) R. Cosin. A Conspiracie, p. 35: Bancroft, D. Positions,
 p. 165: W. Pierce, John Penry p. 297.

(21) Ross pp. 16-17

(22) Harl MSS 6848, 34, 85: Pierce p. 362.

a preaching ministry were even at the brinke to decline
 (23)
 to Brownisme". Even more important and significant from
 our point of view is the fact that for a time at any rate
 after his settlement in Edinburgh Penry's views remained
 unchanged. Proof thereof is to be found in his writings
 on ecclesiastical questions during this period. In his
 "A Briefe Discovery" (1590) Penry stands forth not as
 the champion of the "Congregational way" but of the Church
 of Scotland. He defends the Presbyterians against Ban-
 croft's libels and Browne's accusations. Browne he
 describes as "that noted schismatic" whose treatment
 in Scotland was such as "a proud ungodly man deserved
 to have".
 (24)
 The classic "Di^c Ecclesiae" here appears,
 and it is worth noticing that Penry gives to it the
 Presbyterian, Cartwrightian interpretation "Tell it to
 the elders", the representative officers appointed by
 Christ; not literally as by Browne "Tell it to the whole
 Society".
 (25)

In "Reformation No Enemie" the other treatise
 from Edinburgh on ecclesiastical questions Penry again
 champions the Scottish Presbyterians chiefly against that
 "shameless and most impudent slanderer", Bancroft, who
 had to suffer the ven^oime of his lying and slanderous
 tongue to light upon the Scottish brethren.
 (26)
 It has been
 urged that here Penry "does not proclaim the full Cart-
 wrightian position and is already approaching the Barrowist
 position".
 (27)
 The nature and purpose of this treatise,
 however, must be borne in mind: it is primarily an attack
 on the bishops and their satellites not only for their
 opposition to the Puritans, but particularly because they
 have/

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- (23) Master Some Laid Open In His Coulers p.11
 (24) Penry's "A Briefe Discovery" 44: Pierce p. 268
 (25) Ibid 26: Pierce p. 206
 (26) Penry's "Reformation No Enemie" B.1: Pierce p. 273
 (27) Scott Pearson "Thos. Cartwright" p. 360.

have fostered and encouraged the growth of Romanism during the last twenty years. To argue from the Reformer's failure to expound the Cartwrightian scheme in its entirety in such a work that he has cut adrift from his former associates and is on the verge of becoming a Separatist is hardly fair. It seems to us an undue stressing of the "argumentum e silentio". What ought to be noticed is that Penry puts forward as his ambition and that of those who share his views the abolition of abuses (dumb and non-resident ministers, Archbishops, Bishops, etc.) and "the placing in everie congregation within England" of preaching pastors, doctors, governing elders and ministering deacons ⁽²⁸⁾. In such an aim Penry is a Reformist rather than a Separatist, a Cartwrightian rather than a Barrowist or a Brownist. There is no hint that he has as yet reached the views of the Separatists as to the nature of the true Church, no indication that he shares their abhorrence of the Church of England as at present established, as a travesty of the Church of God.

When then did Penry pass from Puritanism to Separatism? To give a definite answer to that question is impossible. It is plain, as we have seen from his writings, that during the first year of his residence in Scotland he was still a Presbyterian in his outlook and sympathies, but it is significant that thereafter he ceased to publish books on the ecclesiastical question. This was not because of lack of leisure and access to literature. His stay in the Scottish Capital meant both, in a measure he had not known in his fugitive days, when his/

(28) Penry's "Reformation No Enemie" B.3.

his pen had been so ready and his output in his circumstances really prolific. Does it not mean that in his new surroundings and circumstances Penry was not so sure as once he had been about ecclesiastical issues, that he was constrained to think them out afresh until finally as the result of his cogitations he was led to accept the Separatist position?

The Presbyterianism of the South, from which he had come, was not the thorough going, highly organised Genevan Presbyterianism of Scotland with which he now was brought into touch: in some respects it was an Independent Presbyterianism. Examples of Congregationalism e.g. there were within the bounds of the Dedham "classis". "Some non conformist gatherings partook both of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism". Some ministers were now identified with one dissenting current, now with the other. There were several pronounced affinities between Elizabethan Presbyterianism and Separatism⁽²⁹⁾ But between Genevan Presbyterianism which Penry saw at work in Scotland and Separatism there was a great gulf fixed. Witness the clerical attitude to Robert Browne when he came to Edinburgh in 1584.

There can be no doubt that Penry fully realised this, and that his stay in Scotland hastened his Congregational development. The first hand knowledge that he then gained of Genevan Presbyterianism did strengthen, it would seem, his inclination for the larger liberty and democracy of Congregationalism. There is indeed evidence that he had discussions with his Scottish Brethren on the subject.⁽³⁰⁾

It/

(29) Scott Pearson - Thos. Cartwright pp. 414-415.

(30) Calderwood V. 698.

It has been suggested that Penry's forsaking of Puritanism for Separatism was the outcome of an interview with Barrowe. Penry, Barclay declares, "visited Barrowe who told him that he was seeking to bring in Christ by the arm of the flesh, and not by the power of His Word, and in virtue of His Spirit, into the hearts and consciences of men, and so reasoned with him that Penry cast in his lot with the Separatists".⁽³¹⁾ That Barrowe and Penry should meet after the latter's return from Scotland, as Barclay suggests, is, of course, not outside the bounds of possibility, but the probability of such a meeting we question. Penry during these last months of his life was a hunted creature and spent his time in evading "pursuivants"; Barrowe, long since caught, was languishing in prison, expecting that any day might prove his last. The one possible place of meeting was the Fleet Prison where Barrowe was confined, for he was refused bail and was not allowed to be present at any of the assemblies outside,⁽³²⁾ as was Greenwood. Are we to believe that Penry, with the authorities on his track would venture to seek out Barrowe in prison? Is it conceivable that Barrowe, remembering his own capture on a similar visit, would welcome or encourage such a visit? We think it extremely unlikely. Pierce in his life of Penry gives no indication of any such interview; Powicke in his "Henry Barrowe, Separatist" says,- "We find no hint of a meeting between him (Barrowe) and Penry".⁽³³⁾ In the absence therefore of any proof that Penry did visit Barrowe - and Barclay gives none - we question this claim that the two did meet, for it seems to us, not impossible/

(31) R. Barclay, "Inner Life of the Rel. Societies of the Commonwealth" p.41.

(32) J. Powicke "Henry Barrow - Separatist" p. 71.

(33) Ibid p.71.

. impossible, ^{yet} ~~but~~ most improbable. We must look elsewhere than a personal acquaintance with Barrowe for Penry's conversion to Separatism. We must not forget that Barrowe's "Brief Discoverie of the False Church" despite the ban of the authorities had been put into circulation whilst Penry was in Scotland. To Penry it would be of special interest as it dealt with his writings. One wonders whether Barrowe's book may not have played a big part in winning the Welshman to Separatism. On one whose mind was turning definitely to the principles of Separatism as Penry's then was, Barrowe's work could not have been without influence. Even if Penry in exile had not been able to procure and study the book itself, he would not be ignorant of its teaching and the discussion it provoked; and that he would remain unaffected is hard to believe.

This, of course, may be dismissed as mere conjecture, for Penry has given us no indication of the mental processes by which he passed from Puritanism to Separatism. What, however, would seem beyond dispute is that he fled to Scotland in 1589 presumably a Presbyterian, he returned in 1592 a convinced Separatist, henceforth a fearless champion of the "Congregational way", which championship was ere long to cost him his life. Did Penry, however, reveal himself in Scotland as such? Ross, we believe, is wrong in maintaining that he did. ⁽³⁴⁾ Our own opinion is that Penry had reached the Congregational position before he left Scotland. (That immediately after he reached London he threw in his lot with the brethren of the separation - as is generally agreed - is surely proof of this). But open allegiance to Separatism we venture to believe he did not make till his/

(34) Ross pp. 16-17.

his exile was over. How else is Penry's treatment at the hands of the Scottish clergy to be explained? With Separatism and Separatists the Scottish ministers of those days had little patience. The reception given to Browne and his followers when they ventured to Edinburgh, was anything but cordial: they were regarded as schismatics, heretics to be put down with a heavy hand, as we had^{vs} already observed. Would Penry, had he come as a Separatist or had he later openly avowed and proclaimed the Separatist faith, have fared any better? We doubt it. Then, and for many years after,^{as} we shall presently notice, the Scottish Churchmen were quick to put down Brownism or anything that savoured thereof. Yet Penry was made welcome in Scotland. On his own confession he received much kindness, as did his wife and children, from the people of Scotland. (35) Instead of silencing him the ministers (36) invited him to preach, and he did preach, in their Churches. Decree of banishment was issued against him but the clergy (37) took his side and shielded him from its consequences. Even to the end of his stay he was made welcome. We have his word that he might indeed have stayed in Scotland (38) "privately" for the rest of his life. Such a reception and such continued kindness was certainly not extended to Penry as an apostle of Congregationalism with which the Scottish clergy had no sympathy, but to Penry as one who had much in common with their religious views, whose literary efforts on behalf of the faith were not unknown to them, and whom they looked upon as a fellow Presbyterian. That they had discussions with him on matters of faith and that Penry pleaded for greater freedom from secular

control/

(35) Pierce p. 419

(36) Ibid p. 424

(37) Vide Supra pp. 29-30

(38) Vide Supra p. 30: Pierce p. 425.

control than the Scottish Church enjoyed we know, (39) but they regarded him as at one with them on the chief features of Church polity and organisation and on the main issues of the faith, and continued so to regard him while he remained among them. From the facts before us it would therefore seem that Ross's picture of Penry as the bold champion of the "Congregational way" during his Scottish sojourn has no foundation in fact. His open adherence to Congregationalism came later, and his service to Congregationalism was rendered elsewhere.

2
 x (39) Calderwood V. p. 698.

III. THE FIRST HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In the closing years of the Sixteenth and the opening years of the Seventeenth Century there are no traces of anything savouring of Brownism or Separatism in Scotland. It was hardly to be expected. The London Church of Barrowe and Greenwood was broken up in 1593, and its members were driven to seek refuge at Amsterdam. The movement was not wiped out, but it was so thoroughly suppressed that for the next ten or twelve years it was not in a position to assert itself against the authorities in England or to send missionaries to Scotland whose King enamoured of Episcopacy and whose people "thirled" to Presbyterianism would be certain to make common cause against them. In 1603 James VI of Scotland became also James I of England and it was not long ^{before} till he made it plain and clear that the Presbyterian way and the Congregational were alike anathema to him, that his ambition was uniformity of religion in both Countries under the rule of bishops and archbishops. The rigorous,merciless treatment of the Separatist groups at Scrooby and Gainsborough - who were fined and imprisoned and harried until at last escape came by way of the sea to the same cheerless asylum at Amsterdam - was a warning to any in either Country who might be inclined to their beliefs. This persecution really marks the end of the first Separatist movement in England. For the next ten years the authorities were to be undisturbed by opposition from/

from that quarter. Across the sea, under conditions of freedom, Separatism was thriving and expanding, but here, in Britain it was - or it seemed to be - dead.

In 1616, however, Henry Jacob reached London from Leyden and formed a Church there; and so began a new Separatist movement in England. This revival of Separatism in England, it is generally recognised, had ultimately far reaching effects on the religious life of Scotland. We hold, however, that its influence was felt much sooner than has hitherto been realised. Our Congregational historians - e.g. Fletcher, Waddington, Orme, Ross, - without exception regard 1640 or 1642 as the earliest date in the 17th Century when anything resembling Congregationalism or Independency dared to raise its head north of the Tweed. This completely overlooks certain happenings of sixteen or more years earlier when both King and Clergy were convinced that "Brownism" - as they called it - had reappeared in Scotland, and to such an extent that endeavours must be made to suppress it.

Certain men of the Capital at a meeting on the 23rd March 1624³ of "the Counsell, Session and Citizens", convened according to custom, "as a preparative before the Communion", had ventured to offer some criticisms of the doctrine preached by one of the City's Ministers.⁽¹⁾ The King incensed thereat "sent down a direction to a select number of the Secrete Counsel" to try these individuals - six in number - for their boldness, which trial/

(1) Calderwood VII p. 596.

trial took place on "the last of Aprile 1624"⁽²⁾. The Bishop of St. Andrews, in the course of the trial, levelled against one of them, John Meine a merchant, this charge: "John Meine is one of those that keep privat conventicles. He keepeed a Brownist Minister in his hous, teaching and keeping conventicles". Meine denied that the minister in question ever taught at his house. The Bishop thereupon gave this information to the Council: "I was once sett upon the Brownist minister in his hous, but narrowly missed him; he is now dead in Ireland; we are well quyte of him"⁽³⁾.

What are we to understand by this accusation? It may mean that a Brownist had found his way to Scotland either from England or from abroad and had attempted to gather a following. On the other hand it may mean that one of the Presbyterian ministers who had refused to conform to Episcopacy and some folks who shared his views had been holding private meetings after the fashion of the Brownists. The latter explanation is perhaps the more likely. But on either interpretation it would seem that Brownism of a sort did exist in Edinburgh in 1624, - if not earlier. Nor is this the only evidence thereof. Further proof is found in the fact that a royal proclamation of the same year, prohibiting meetings for hearing deprived Presbyterian Ministers, aimed also at the prevention of Brownist, Anabaptist and other Sects. There it is bluntly asserted in reference to contemporary happenings that "such seeds of separation, singularitie of blind or fained zeale have brought forth damned sects of/

(2) Ibid p. 600

(3) Ibid p. 604

of Anabaptists, Families of Love, Brownists and
 manie such pests".⁽⁴⁾ Again on the 23rd of July 1624, the
 Provost, baillies and councillors were summoned to Holy-
 rood to purge themselves by their oath to be free of the
 conventicles that were being held in the City; and to
 urge them thereto they were assured by the Chancellor
 that "the King was informed that there were diverse sects
 of religion croppen in among them, as of the Brownists,
 Waterdowpers and Siclyke which were not tolerable".⁽⁵⁾

It is surely plain therefore that much earlier than
 has been generally recognised a revived Separatism in
 the South was not without influence and effect in the
 North; that as early as 1624 - sixteen years previous to
 the usually accepted date - Brownist, Separatist principle
 were in a measure being tried out in Scotland. It is
 not claimed that the experiment was thorough, extensive,
 or permanent. It may be dismissed as a passing phase -
 a reaction to the tyrannical attempts of James at eccles-
 iastical uniformity. The point overlooked by Ross,
 Fletcher and others, is that it was made. Brownism of a
 sort did exist in Edinburgh as early as 1624 and apparent-
 ly caused some commotion, inspired some dread in official
 circles as to whither it tended, into what it might
 develop unless curbed and checked. Even then the King
 and his Councillors realised that the beliefs of the
 English Separatists were being sown and taking root in
 the soil of Scottish minds, and to prevent any harvest
 therefrom set themselves to destroy this pest, this
 noxious weed, for so they regarded it.

Somewhat similar is the situation some years

later/

(4) Ibid p. 612

(5) Ibid p. 620

later, in 1640, only, if a Presbyterian historian is to be believed, some progress had been made. "Independent or Sectarian phanaticke wayes" by this time had passed beyond the sowing stage, had indeen taken root, and "wer beginning to budd in Scotlande"⁽⁶⁾. James to the end persisted in his efforts at uniformity but he was not wholly successful. All through the years during which the prelatic party was dominant, there were those up and down the Country who refused to conform and adopted the measure of meeting together in private, engaging in reading of the Scriptures, exhortation, and prayer for their mutual edification. In 1638 the Glasgow Assembly abolished Episcopacy and re-established Presbyterianism, and the original reason for these private gatherings no longer existed. They might have ceased, probably they would have ceased, but for the settlement in the West of Scotland of some from England and Ireland about this time. We hear of "one Thomas Livingston, a taylor, and another, Mr Cornall, a chirurgeon, (both supposed to favour the Brownistical way) "who" came from England as soon as Episcopacy had been thrust out", and also of the arrival from Ireland of "a fleece of Scots people who being dissatisfied with the forms of that Church had long ago forsaken the public assemblies thereof and be-taken themselves to conventicles"⁽⁷⁾. Baillie informs us that his countrymen in Ireland, most of whom now sought shelter in Scotland, had become acquainted with the discipline of the New England Churches and some of them, who had thought of trying their fortunes there, inclined towards the discipline of these Churches, while others of them had been/

(6) Gordon's "Scots Affairs" III. p. 223

(7) Bishop Guthrie's Memoirs p. 77: Gordon's "Scots Affairs" III. p. 272

been influenced by Brownists "towards their conceits".⁽⁸⁾
 By these immigrants, as one would expect, private religious meetings were continued, and interest in them apparently revived and spread. At first nothing was urged against the family meetings, as they now were called. Indeed certain of the ministers seem to have approved. But soon there was a hue and cry against them. Once again there was a danger of Brownism. Many of the ministers were "deeply affected". For them there was a fearsome possibility that these meetings might lead to the rise in Scotland of that hated Independency which was just beginning to raise its head very powerfully in England. "Mr David Calderwood (who in the time of his exile had seen the wild follies of the English Brownists in Arnheim and Amsterdam)⁽⁹⁾" was but one of many who planned to have an act against such gatherings passed at the General Assembly of 1639. In this Calderwood and his friends failed, but in the Assembly held at Aberdeen the following year the question was raised again and occasioned several vehement debates. In the end "an act anent the order-⁽¹⁰⁾ing of family exercise" was passed. By this act it was thought to make an end of private religious meetings, for it was laid down that different families must not meet together for worship, and that the Scriptures must not be expounded except by ministers or those in training for the ministry.⁽¹¹⁾ "All of us ^{did} think", Baillie wrote at the close of the Assembly "that the storme was close over and gone; yet behold, when leist we expect it, it does blow up againe as boysterouslie as ever".⁽¹²⁾ The "conceits" of "the favourers of the Brownistical way"

from/

(8) Baillie's "Letters" I. p.249

(9) Bishop Guthrie's Memoris p.78: Gordon's "Scots Affairs" III. p.272

(10) Peterkin's "Kirk Records" p.279

(11) Gordon's "Scots Affairs" pp. 222-3

(12) Baillie's "Letters" I. p.254.

from England and Ireland had spread even more than Baillie and his party had realised. Both among the Clergy and the laity there were many who were sympathetic. Such was their strength in the West that there the Aberdeen Act was from the first a dead letter. It was inevitable, therefore, that in the Assembly of 1641 the contest of the preceding year should be renewed. As before there were heated discussions, but on this occasion with a very different result; the Act of 1640 was consigned to oblivion and a new act "against impiety and schisme" was passed. By this later act, which was vague and indefinite, private meetings were no longer forbidden, but a strong stern warning against the danger of "error, Scandall, Schisme" was given and members of the Kirk were exhorted to eschew all meetings which were likely to breed
(13)
such. The extent to which Brownist "conceits" had laid hold of the popular mind is evidence by the fact that this was felt to be a difficult and delicate situation that called for considerable discussion behind the scenes where a decision likely to preserve peace and harmony in the Church could be reached. It was, indeed, only after prolonged conference between certain noble laymen and distinguished ministers whilst the Assembly was in session that differences were composed, and then only after those who were suspected of being "in favour of the recent innovations purged themselves and professed to be at one with their brethren". Baillie expresses the pious hope that "this happie concord, whereof

Argyle/

(13) Peterkin's "Kirk Records" p. 294

(14) Baillie's "Letters" I. pp. 362-363.

Argyle and Mr Henderson were the happy instruments will have a great blessing to the whole land which everywhere (14) began to be fashed with idle toys and scruples".

What were those scruples with which the country was being "fashed", those much debated innovations for which the Brownists lately came into Scotland were held responsible, and which some regarded as the first links of the whole chain of Brownism? They were not innovation in Church government; they were not scruples about the Presbyterian polity. There was no attempt to set up separate, independent churches. It is true, of course, that those settlers from the North of Ireland had started family meetings or continued such meetings as were already in existence. It is also true that these were religious gatherings conducted by laymen. But that Churches after the Independent plan were set up we have no hint. "Independent or sectarian phanaticke wayes wer beginning to bud in Scotlande"; they had not as yet burst into full bloom. The "jus divinum" of Presbyterianism was not as yet called in question.

The innovations introduced by the Brownists at this time besides the family meetings were chiefly innovations in worship. The Church of Scotland of that day had a prayer-book- "the Book of Common Order", commonly called "John Knox's Liturgy". The scene in St. Giles, Edinburgh in 1637 and the wide-spread opposition to Land's Service Book are not to be taken as indicative of a dislike to set forms of prayer but rather of the preference of the Scottish people for their own prayer/

(14) Baillie's "Letters" I. pp. 362-363.

prayer book to one imported from England and imposed by royal authority. At the ordinary services there was besides the use of set prayers such ritual and ceremonial as kneeling in the pulpit, the singing of "Gloria Patri" etc. The innovations with which the Brownists, and those who were suspected of sympathy with them, were disturbing the peace of the Kirk, were just attempts at the abolition of this ritual and ceremonial.⁽¹⁵⁾ Set forms of prayer they were against and the repetition of the Lord's prayer, which was a feature of every service, they would away with. (The Laird of Leckie, a great promoter of family meetings, is reputed to have described the Lord's prayer as "a threadbare prayer".)⁽¹⁶⁾ The aim of the innovators seems to have been greater simplicity and spontaneity in worship and a fuller opportunity to develop their spiritual life. But such departure from precedent and tradition was resented, and perhaps dreaded. Who in the light of what was happening across the Border could tell whether it might lead? The Church Leaders took time by the forelock and in the Assembly of 1641 passed, in addition to the "act against impiety and schisme", a further "act anent Novations" which forbade the introduction of any novation in doctrine, worship or government, and ordered presbyteries and synods to deal with transgressors.⁽¹⁷⁾ The last, however, had not been heard in Scotland of these Brownist innovations. Scottish divines were, at the Westminster Assembly to be made more familiar with such views on worship by personal encounters with the/

(15) Ibid p. 362

(16) Gordon's "Scots Affairs" III p. 223

(17) Peterkins Kirk Records p. 294.

the representatives of Independency there. The Scottish people as a whole were to be made better acquainted with these views by Cromwell's soldiers during the time of the Commonwealth. The Independents' ideas of Church Government have never at any time found general favour in Scotland, but their ideas of worship, which about this time first appeared in Scotland, did eventually find such acceptance and gave to our Scottish services those characteristics of plainness and simplicity, freedom and spontaneity that distinguished them for well nigh two hundred years. Indeed only very recently have attempts to depart therefrom achieved any measure of success.

The General Assembly of 1641 is significant from our point of view not merely because of the proceedings and enactments to which reference has been made, but also because of its pronouncement on Independency as a form of Church polity. A letter was submitted from certain London Ministers eager to establish Presbyterianism there but much hampered and hindered in that design by "some of their brethren, who were for Independencie of congregations", and who sought to strengthen their position by claiming that "some of the most eminent men" in the Scottish Kirk were of their way of thinking. The assurance of Counsel which the London Ministers desired the Assembly was not slow to give. A reply was sent denying emphatically that any of the Scottish Ministers were so affected, they are described as "of one heart, and/

(18) Peterkin's Kirk Records p. 295: Baillie's Letters I. 364.

and one soule", fully persuaded that the Presbyterian form of Church Government is of God. Not only are they resolved "to hold the same constantly" all the days of their life, but it is their earnest desire that "God would blesse all the Christian Kirks, especially the famous Kirk of England with this divine Forme of Government". The reply further deplores that there should be among "godly ministers and brethren" differences of opinion on the question of Church government and fears that such differences must lead to ⁽¹⁹⁾ division on matters of doctrine and worship. The Assembly's position is thus perfectly plain; among the Reformed Churches there should be but one form of Church government, and that according to "the unanimous judgment and uniforme practice" of the Scottish Kirk ought to be not Independency but Presbyterianism, which is not of man but of God. Here we have the earliest direct declaration of the Supreme Court of the Scottish Kirk against Independency. This new fangled Independency was as little liked as the more familiar Episcopacy and it must be as resolutely opposed. This attitude is reiterated and emphasised in the reply of the following year's Assembly to "the Declaration of the Parliament of England". There again is urged the desirability of one form of Church government in both countries, and that the Presbyterian method of Assemblies higher and lower in their strong and beautiful subordination which is jure divino. Any other form is but "an humane ordinance" and "without wronging/

(19) Peterkin's Kirk Records p. 296.

wronging any man's conscience may be altered and abolished". The names of heresies and Sects, Puritans, Conformists, Separatists, Anabaptists etc. — ought to be suppressed. (20) There is no hint that as yet Churches after the Independent pattern have been set up in Scotland, but it is obvious that any attempt to set up such Churches would be strenuously resisted, that indeed any suspected of leanings towards Sectarian ways would fall under the censure of the Kirk. Proof thereof we have in certain happenings of this very period. Favourers of "the Brownistical way" had, as we have observed, found refuge in Scotland a year or two previously but they seem to have settled in the West. There is no trace of them in the North. About 1642 however "ther cam in quyetlie to Abirdene one called Othro Ferrendail ane Irish man, and ane Skynner of his calling", who began preaching in private houses. One of the Ministers of Aberdeen, Andrew Cant is said to have favoured or connived at Ferrendail's proceedings; and another, John Oswald, was thought not to dislike them. But even such clerical sympathy did not mean that the Irishman was to be left unmolested. Local records tell us that he was "trappit for preiching on the night in summ houses in the toune, befoir there fameleis, with cloiss durris, nocturnall doctrein, or Brounaisme, as wes sed". (21) It would seem, however, that Ferrendail's labours had not been altogether in vain, for we hear of "gryte bussiness about Brounaisme in this Assemblie (1642) laitly croppin in to Abirdene, and uther partis of the countrie". (22) A considerable number of people/

(20) Peterkin's Kirk Records pp. 324-25.

(21) Spalding II p. 187, 203.

(22) Ibid pp. 202-203.

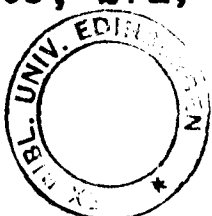
people had apparently gathered round the Irish preacher and received the truth from his lips, for William Maxwell, Thomas Pait, Gilbert Gairdin of Tullifroskie and his whole family are mentioned as persons who favoured his doctrine.⁽²³⁾ The treatment meted out to these and to Ferrendail reveals how little a triumphant Presbyterian was prepared to tolerate anything that had the slightest suggestion of Brownism or Independency. Ferrendail to save himself denied "the Brounistis tenetis", subscribed the covenant, approved the Scottish Kirk and was then received, "as ane good barne" by Mr Andrew Cant. The Presbytery, however, were not satisfied with this repentance, for it was done at a pre-Communion service on a Saturday and they had ordered it to be performed on a Sunday "after sermon". They accordingly referred Ferrendail to the next provincial Assembly which expressed satisfaction with his previous abjuring of Brownism but required him to sign the covenant a second time.⁽²⁴⁾ Maxwell, who did not recant but took refuge in flight, was sought for "and all men forbidden out of the pulpits of our Presbeterie to recept him".⁽²⁵⁾ Gilbert Gairdin of Tullifroskie was even more severely dealt with. Sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him, and afterwards he was taken upon the streets of Edinburgh and put in prison for fully 18 months for his adherence to Brownism.⁽²⁶⁾ There is no evidence that Ferrendail or his converts formed, or tried to form, a Church on Independent principles, but they did seek nourishment for their souls outside the regular services of/

(23) Ibid p. 203

(24) Ibid pp. 217, 226, 241

(25) Ibid p. 229

(26) Ibid pp. 203, 271; Pittillok p. 13.



of the Kirk and from other preachers than ministers of the Kirk - they were guilty of maintaining "sum poyntes of Brounaisme". In so doing they incurred the wrath of the ecclesiastical authorities who did not hesitate to enlist the aid of the civil power to punish them and to crush what might prove the beginnings of Independency in Scotland.

From this time to the invasion by Cromwell's soldiers measures of the severest character were enforced against all dissenters from the then triumphant Presbyterianism and precautions were taken to keep out of the Country anything and anybody that might encourage such dissent by spreading abroad the errors of Independency. The General Assembly of 1643 e.g. passed an "Act for searching books tending to Separation". According to this Act it was most necessary that ministers, especially ministers upon the coasts, should "try and search" for all such books; and it is ordained that if they find any, they shall present the same to presbyteries, "that some course may be taken to hinder the dispersing thereof". The Act concludes with an earnest request "to the Civill Magistrates to concurre with their (27) authoritie in all things, for effectual execution thereof". What prompted such measures? There was, of course, a firm belief in the jus divinum of Presbyterianism, the blessings of which in virtue of the Solemn League ^{of} Covenant were now to be extended to England. Presbyterianism was henceforth to be the form of Church government in/

(27) Peterkin's "Kirk Records" pp. 346, 347.

in both Countries. The English Commissioners at one stage in the negotiations had suggested that room should be left for the toleration of Independency but the Assembly would not hear of this. There must be Presbyterianism, and Presbyterianism only, over all the land. What course could those who so believed and planned take but put down all efforts at dissent?

This, however, was not the sole reason for such measures. Independency, like Prelacy, was disliked, - but it was also feared. There was a very real and growing dread that Independency might spread to Scotland and undermine, or at any rate endanger the beloved Presbyterian polity. Of this we have many indications. Baillie gives us perhaps the earliest. His famous "Dissuasive from the Errours of the Tyme", was not given to the world until 1645 but writing from his Manse in Kilwinning in 1642 he confesses: "Brownists conceits still fashes us here". So concerned is he by these that he has penned a treatise against the Brownists. His intention was to publish it, perhaps as a kind of antidote to the Separatist infection then spreading throughout the land. He seems to have refrained from doing so, the treatise was ultimately incorporated in his "Dissuasive". The fact, however, that Baillie was moved to write it is surely proof that he felt something of the kind to be necessary, that to his mind the situation was then not without difficulty and danger. A year later Baillie is even more convinced of the strength and menace of Independency/

(28) Baillie's Letters II pp. 27.

Independency, for from London he writes that the Scots Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly "purpose not to meddle" with it in haste, "till it please God to advance our Armie, which we expect will much assist our arguments"⁽²⁹⁾. There assuredly we have not merely dislike but dread. Some five months later, writing to Robert Blair, he is genuinely alarmed. "The most part of my Lord Manchester's Armie", he tells Blair "are seduced to Independencie". As Manchester's forces have been joined by the Scots Army, who can tell what may happen? "Our sillysimple lads are in great danger of being infected by their Companie; and if that pest enter our Armie we fear it may spread". He is most anxious to be advised of prudent and safe ways of preventing "the danger of this evill, which we all apprehend to be very great"⁽³⁰⁾. This dread of Independency and more particularly of its spreading to Scotland did not diminish but rather grew as Sectaries increased in the army and among the civil population of England. In a declaration of the Commission of the General Assembly of 14th July 1647 we have it frankly recognised: "From this generation and partie of Sectaries sprung up in the bosome of our neighbour land, it is that we have reason to fear, not only great evils to befall unto our brethren there but also sad consequences to saise upon ourselves We having such vicinity and so frequent commerce and correspondence with that nation cannot but be in danger to have infection derived unto us from thence, to have the beginnings and/

(29) Ibid p. 111

(30) Ibid p. 185.

and seeds of heresie and schisme brought in amongst us, which may spread as a leprosie and fret as a gangren,⁽³¹⁾ unto the ~~poys~~soning and corrupting of many". So impressed by this terrible possibility was the Assembly of the following month that it passed an Act forbidding all parties to receive or sanction any persons infected with the errors of Independency or Anabaptism. It further forbade the importing or spreading of books and pamphlets advocating the same. Presbyteries and Synods were instructed to proceed against all who offended in these matters, while civil magistrates were enjoined to assist⁽³²⁾ ministers and Presbyteries in carrying out this act.

"These were the ~~be~~ blessed days of Presbyterian Supremacy", writes one Congregational historian scornfully,⁽³³⁾ "and such was the use they made of their power". It is, however, surely worth while to enquire why the Presbyterian Divines did make such use of their power, to find, if we can, an explanation of the dread which Independency and similar ideas then inspired in Scottish minds and hearts, and which led to such stern endeavours to repress and extirpate them. We must remember the situation in Scotland at this time; the power of the King was gone, Parliament was in abeyance, the General Assembly was really the governing body and its ministers believed and maintained that they had derived their legislative authority from Jesus Christ, the King, and head of the Church. Religion was dominant in the national mind but it was the religion of the Old Testament/

(31) G.A. Comm. Records 1646-1647 p. 292

(32) Peterkin's Kirk Records p. 476

(33) Orme's "Owen" p. 487

ment rather than that of the New. Certainly it was narrow in its outlook and bitter in its spirit. The Scottish people were the chosen people: The Scottish Church was the Church - that seems to have been the idea in many minds. Now the Scottish Church was Presbyterian in its polity, for which polity they believed they could claim a "jus divinum". It was neither accidental nor man-made but Divine in its origin and had Scripture for its warrant. Was not the primitive Church, the Church the Apostles founded a Presbyterian Church? Its polity therefore was right and all others wrong. How could the word be truly preached, the Sacraments rightly administered, or souls saved in a Church that had no Scripture warrant for its origin and Government? The common notion seems to have been that there could be no religion beyond the pale of Presbytery.

In such a situation there was as little room for Independency as previously there had been for Episcopacy. Independency with its insistence on the right of each company of Christians to manage their own affairs under the guidance of the Spirit of Christ was the antithesis of Presbyterianism with its "Assemblies higher and lower in their strong and beautiful subordination", directing and controlling the affairs of the local congregations. To the Scottish Ecclesiastics of that day it was beside the point to argue that some might conscientiously prefer Independency to Presbyterianism. The latter to them was the divine form of Church Government; the other therefore, was a form of error/

error, and every error must be destroyed.

Independency, however, gave further cause for alarm, for it meant error in doctrine and worship as well as in government. For one thing it allowed and encouraged lay-preaching. "They (the Independents) give libertie", Baillie explains, "to any man who is able, though he never intend the ministerie to preach publicklie in the face of the Church"⁽³³⁾, and it is obvious that this is one of his objections to them. This objection was shared by his contemporaries who held that it belonged to pastors regularly ordained to administer the Sacraments and to instruct the flock. With lay-preaching they had no sympathy. To them it was neither right nor expedient for a private person, at his own impulse, to take on him the pastor's function whether in the pulpit or at the communion table. The General Assembly of 1647 makes plain its detestation and dread of this practice of the Independents in its declaration that "the Charge and Office of interpreting the holy Scriptures is a part of the Ministeriall calling" which none (howsoever otherwise qualified) should take unto him in any place but he that⁽³⁴⁾ is duely called thereunto by God and his Kirk".

That, however, was but a small part of the folly of Independency. Who were these Independents? Were they not Sectaries, Separatists? The Church as by law established did not please them; they did not hesitate to separate and start Churches of their own. The membership of/

(33) Baillie's "Letters" II p. 254

(34) Peterkin's Kirk Records p. 473

of these Churches was allowed only on their conditions. "They will admitt of none to be members of their congregations of whose true grace and regeneration they have no good evidences". Here was a decided departure from established practice. "By this means they would keep out all the Christian Church, fourty for one of the members of the best Reformed Churches." (35)

To the Scottish Divines of the 17th Century with their singularly high conception of the unity of the Church^{ll} Separatism of the Independents was intolerable. With Augustine's views of the Catholic Church and of schism they heartily sympathised. "Better" says the Westminster Committee, in their reasonings with the Five Brethren, "that a man want the Lord's Supper if his conscience scruple about some things in it, than make a separation from the congregation of which he is a member. The one thing is safer than the other" (36). Rutherford, Brown, Gillespie, Durham seek to multiply reasons against separation and show themselves willing to bear the heaviest burdens and to submit to the severest strain rather than take what to them is the most painful step of separation. "How much better", says Gillespie, "is it that you be one with the Reformed Churches, though somewhat straightened and bound up than to be divided though at full liberty and elbow room:" (37) In view of the terrible havoc wrought within and without the Church by schism every endeavour should be put forth to prevent a division being made and to heal it when it has taken place. "Never" writes Durham "did men/

(35) Baillie's "Letters" II p. 254

(36) J. Walker "Theology & Theologians" of Scot p. 101

(37) Ibid p. 103

men run to quench fire in a city, lest all should be destroyed, with more diligence than men ought to bestir themselves to ~~quench~~ this in the Church; never did mariners use more speed to stop a leak in a ship, lest all should be drowned, than ministers especially and all Christian men should haste to stop this beginning of the breaking in of the waters of strife, lest thereby the whole Church be overwhelmed".⁽³⁸⁾ The Separation of the Independents by such men could only be regarded with horror. They saw in it a repetition of the folly of the Donatists. To the Independents it might occasion no distress to have true Churches of Christ side by side with one another, forming separate organisations, with separate governments; but to the Scottish Presbyterians it was inadmissible. The unity of the Church must be preserved at all costs, even, if necessary, by calling in the aid of the civil magistrate.

One further tenet of the Independents which filled the Presbyterian divines of that day with dismay must be remembered. "Many of them preach and some print a libertie of conscience, at least the great equitie of tolleration of all religions".⁽³⁹⁾ It is questionable if the Scottish divines were quite fair in their presentation of the Independents' position, at least the position of the Independents in the Westminster Assembly in regard to toleration. According to a declaration of the Commission of the General Assembly of 14th July 1647 the Independents wanted not only toleration, "but an absolute and universall libertie to believe and to professe and propagat without disturbance/

(38) Durham on "Scandal" pp. 313 et seq.

(39) Baillie's "Letters" II p. 254.

disturbance in mater of Religion whatsoever is apprehended as truth, though in itself never ~~so~~ monstrous and erroneous".⁽⁴⁰⁾ But the great majority of the Independents were not out for anything so sweeping. The principle of religious liberty in those days was novel, and even to the Independents not altogether acceptable. Even Cromwell in the hey-day of his power had to compromise. William Bartlet wrote his able treatise "Ichnographia" (1646) on purpose to make clear just what the Independents of the Westminster Assembly stood for, and one of his longest sections is concerned to show that they never said a word in favour of an unlimited toleration. They did not question the right or duty of the civil power to supervise the Church, nay, to establish the true Church and maintain it against the false.⁽⁴¹⁾ In this they claimed to go much further than the Presbyterians.⁽⁴²⁾ At the same time they did want toleration for themselves. They sought liberty to form congregations, but, if Bartlet is right, that did not mean liberty for all sorts to form congregations. But to even a limited toleration the Presbyterian Divines were not prepared to agree. Presbyterianism then had no idea of dividing with other forms of faith the empire of the land. The Church's duty was to suppress heresy and schism, and the slightest accommodation of tender conscience, as they saw it opened the door to any and every form of religious error; and certainly this was a time when all manner of strange doctrines were being noised abroad. Presbyterianism therefore must be sole/

(40) G.A. Comm Records (1646/7) p. 391.

(41) W. Bartlet/s "Ichnographia" p. 135

(42) "An Apologeticall Narration" p. 19

sole and supreme. No other preaching or worship must be allowed. Thus and thus only could there be secured for the whole nation the inestimable blessings of a true confession of faith, a form of worship free from superstition, and a devout and orthodox ministry; Thus and thus alone could the religious faith and the religious life of the people be secured from corruption.

It is of course easy for us of these later days to pour scorn on the Scots of ~~these~~^{those} times and to dismiss them as bigoted and fanatical. But had they ~~had~~ been without their strong convictions, had they been without that tremendous faith in the jus divinum of Presbyterianism which demanded that they have nothing to do with such errors as Independency and Prelacy would they have been the men they were, and might not our national story have been altogether different? J.A. Froude has some apposite words with which we may fitly conclude this section:

"Suppose the Kirk had been the broad, liberal, philosophical, intellectual thing which some people think it ought to have been, how would it have fared in that Crusade; how altogether would it have encountered those surplices of Archbishop Laud or those dragoons of Claverhouse? It is hard to lose ones life for a 'perhaps'; and philosophical belief at the bottom means a 'perhaps' and nothing more. For more than half of the 17th century the battle had to be fought out in Scotland, which in reality was the battle between liberty and despotism and where except in an intense burning conviction that they were maintaining God's cause against the devil could the poor Scotch people have found the strength for the unequal struggle which was forced upon them?" (43)

(43) J.A. Froude, "Short Studies on Great Subjects" p. 147.

THE CROMWELLIAN PERIOD IN SCOTLAND.

We come now to that period when Independency was for the first time introduced into Scotland in an open manner and on a large scale. Folks of this persuasion had, of course, found their way to Scotland before this time, but they had come singly or in comparatively small companies and the vigilance of the authorities had been such that anything like wide spread and open public propaganda had been impossible. They had had to be content for the most part with "nocturnal" meetings in private houses "with cloiss durris". Now they came as a great conquering host and their doctrine they were free to proclaim without let or hindrance. The hated, dreaded Independency was imported in such a way as could not be resisted.

Early in 1650 the English Army under Cromwell - in which Independents and Baptists predominated - invaded Scotland to revenge the injuries done by the Scots during their invasion of England and to root out the powerful party which in the North supported the pretensions of Charles II. Accompanying that Army as Chaplains were such stalwart Independents as John Owen and ^SJoseph Caryl who regularly preached not only to the English soldiers but also to the Scottish people. The troops themselves, however, - officers and men alike - were not slow to give a reason for the faith that was in them. Cromwell's "booted Apostles" were indeed "sui generis"; Scotland had never seen their like before. They carried with them the message of the Gospel as well as the munitions of War, and when/

when occasion presented itself they did not hesitate to take possession of the pulpit and preach with zeal and fervour, and sometimes at least with a certain measure of acceptability. We are told e.g. of General Lambert securing for himself the East Kirk of Edinburgh, "quhairin thair wes dyveris and sindris sermounis preached, alsiweill by Captaines and Lieutenantis and trooperis of his Army, as by ordiner pastouris and Englische Ministeris It was thocht that these men wer weill giftit yet wer not ordourlie callit according to the discipline observit within the Kingdom of Scotland".⁽¹⁾

The leaders of the Scottish Kirk had viewed with great concern the possibility of Cromwell's Ironsides invading Scotland. It was bad enough that they should be disseminating erroneous doctrine in England, but how much worse if they were to do the same in Scotland? Who could tell what might be the effect on ignorant and unstable minds? It would mean confusion and dissolution and the pillars of religion and government "ruined and razed".⁽²⁾ When the threat became a reality and the English invaders were entrenched on Scottish soil the Commission of the General Assembly sought to warn the inhabitants of Edinburgh of the peril in which they stood. Cromwell's soldiers were "seducers" whom they must shun if they valued their immortal souls. For, as the Commission said with great bluntness of speech "who ever will venture to touch pitch may be defyled before they be awaire? Who will/

(1) Nicoll pp. 68-69

(2) G.A. Comm. Records (1648-49) p. 427.

will take fyre in their bosome readille shall be scorched therewith? Who will not abstain from the harlot's house shall not be innocent? Take good heed dearlie beloved of the wyles, the subtilties of the Devill"⁽³⁾.

The ministers of Edinburgh apparently acted on this counsel, for on the approach of the English Army they fled to the Castle. The General sent notice to the Governor that the Ministers might return to the discharge of their duties, that they should have full liberty to preach, and that none should molest them. They replied that no security being offered for their persons they, therefore, resolved to reserve themselves for better times. Cromwell to this rejoined that if their Master's service were chiefly in their eye, imagination of suffering would not have caused such a reply. He further claimed that the Ministers of England were supported and had liberty to preach the Gospel, and that none had been troubled in England or Ireland for preaching the Gospel. The Scottish Ministers sent an answer to this letter in which they charged Cromwell with opening the pulpit door to all intruders by means of which a flood of errors had broken in upon the nation. To this the General replies:- "Are you troubled that Christ is preached? Where do you find in Scripture that preaching is included in your function..... I hope that he that ascended upon high may give his gifts to whom he please; and if those gifts be the seal of mission, be not/

(3) G.A. Comm. Records (1650-52) p. 241.

not envious, though Eldad and Medad prophecy"⁽⁴⁾ Clearly Cromwell had the better of the ministers in the argument but they remained for the nonce in the security of the Castle. By so doing, however, they exposed their congregations to the very peril against which they had warned them, for Owen and other Independent divines occupied their pulpits and preached to their people.

The Glasgow Ministers shewed themselves men of a different stamp. When Cromwell, during his stay in that city attended public worship he heard honest discourses "pertinent to his case", and "generally all who preached that day in the Town gave a fair enough testimony against the Sectaries". He, however, did not silence them on that account. On the contrary, "the General sent for those ministers and moderately debated those matters with them and shewed them wherein they were mistaken, and thus sought to win them by fair means, rather than to punish them."⁽⁵⁾ Such indeed was Cromwell's policy, at least until the closing years of the Commonwealth; he was prepared to grant a wide toleration. This indeed is a cause for complaint, that "the hand of power is not heavie on any for matters of religion, no not on Quakers, who are railers, against the Protectour's person", not even on "Papists who grow much in the North of Scotland, more than these 80 years, without any controll"⁽⁶⁾

The policy of the English Government in religious matters was set forth in a declaration published in 1652: "All possible care shall be used for/

(4) Carlyle's "Cromwell's Letters" cxxxiv, cxxxvi: Whitelocke pp. 458-9.

(5) Whitelocke p. 468: Baillie's Letters III pp. 165-166

(6) Baillie's Letters III p. 291.

for the publishing of the Gospel ^{of} ~~on~~ Christ in all parts of the land, and provision made and allowed to the faithful dispensers thereof, together with such other encouragement as the magistrates may give". Had the declaration stopped there the Presbyterians would probably have received it with favour, but unfortunately from their point of view it went a good deal further. It laid down that care shall also "be taken for removing of scandalous persons intruded into the work of the ministry, and placing others fully qualified with gifts for the instructing of the people in their stead". This of course was strongly resented as civil intervention in ecclesiastical affairs. More serious still was the offer of encouragement and protection for those whose consciences would not let them worship God according to the order of the National Church but sought to do so "in any other Gospel way"⁽⁷⁾. Such an offer the Presbyterians disliked intensely for it opened the door to forms of worship other than their own. It meant toleration, which they looked upon as a poisonous plant which should never be allowed to take root in a covenanted land.

This policy, however, prevailed during most of the Commonwealth period. It may be urged, of course, that in regard to the General Assembly it was largely departed from, and it has to be admitted that in relation to the Supreme Court of the Scottish Church the policy of Cromwell was one of suppression. Of the proceedings of the General Assembly at Edinburgh in July 1650 there is no printed record. The next convened at St. Andrews in July 1651, adjourned without doing/

(7) Scotland and the Commonwealth xxxvi-vii: Nicoll p.83

doing any business and when later it assembled at Dundee it dissolved with precipitate haste on hearing that Cromwell's men were on the march from Perth. This was followed by a meeting at Edinburgh in July 1652. The following year an Assembly was essayed once again at Edinburgh but it was broken up by Colonel Cotterel in spite of the protests of the Moderator, David Dickson; and some 37 years were to elapse before another General Assembly was held. It ought to be remembered, however, that in the Declaration of Policy of 1652 it was explicitly stated that religious freedom was granted only to those "who demean themselves peaceably and becomingly to the government and authority by which they received the same."⁽⁸⁾ The attitude of successive General Assemblies to the English Army can hardly be said to meet these conditions. From the first the General Assembly was avowedly antagonistic to the English Army and as openly sympathetic to Charles II. A government bent on rooting out the party supporting the pretensions of Charles could hardly be expected to allow the Assembly to continue. In fairness to Cromwell it ought to be remembered that he interfered with none of the other rights of the Church. No attempt was made by his authority to interfere with the meetings of Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods. The Church of Scotland in fulfilling its real function of proclaiming the Gospel and nourishing the spiritual life of the nation was unmolested and was indeed encouraged.

Both Orme and Fletcher state definitely that the Commissioners sent down from Parliament in 1651 to visit the Universities and to settle liberty of conscience/

(8) Scotland and the Commonwealth xxxvi.

conscience throughout the land presented to the General Assembly of 1652 a declaration in favour of "Congregational Discipline, the purity of Communion and toleration"⁽⁹⁾. Orme further states that the heads of this Declaration are preserved in Whitelocke and proceeds to set them forth. It ought to be noticed that Whitelocke makes no mention of the English Commissioners. His statement is to the effect that a Declaration was submitted to "the Kirke Assembly at Edinburgh"⁽¹⁰⁾; he gives no indication as to who presented it. There seems little doubt that the Parliamentary Commissioners were not responsible for it. A perusal of Whitelocke's pages makes it plain that what he furnishes is an excellent summary of a lengthy statement submitted in 1652, not to the General Assembly, but to certain leading men of the Church by Alexander Jaffray of Aberdeen and signed by him and others of that City.⁽¹¹⁾ The claims therefore of Orme and Fletcher that the English Authorities sought at this time⁽¹²⁾ to convert the Scottish Church to Congregationalism must be dismissed as made under a misapprehension and without foundation in fact.

What, however, is beyond dispute is that in spite of the indignation of the Kirk, the representatives of the government did, as they had indicated in their declaration, from time to time remove such ministers as they deemed unsuited for their office and put in their place those who held Separatist views. "When a very few of the remonstrants and the Independent party", Baillie complains, "will call a man, he gets the Kirk and the stipend; but whom the Presbytery, and well near the whole Congregation calls and admits, he must preach in the fields, or in a barn without stipend".⁽¹²⁾

In/

(9) Orme in "London Christian Instructor" (1819) p. 28: Fletcher p. 137

(10) Whitelocke pp. 514-515

(11) Wodrow MSS Fol.30-34: Barclay's Diary of Alexander Jaffray p. 162 et. seq: Waddington pp. 496 et. seq.

(12) Baillie's Letters III p. 244

In the Kirk of Kilbryde, "the best stipend in the west", one Thomas Charteris, was settled and gathered round him a small congregation of Independents, while the great majority of the parishioners who clung to Presbyterianism had to build a meeting place for themselves and find a salary for their minister.⁽¹³⁾ Another "Sectarie" was planted in Lenzie; and in other parts of the Country similar settlements took place, or were attempted.⁽¹⁴⁾

According to Ross, Independency made no headway in Scotland during the Cromwellian period nor were any Independent Churches formed as the result of the English Soldiers' Missionary efforts.⁽¹⁵⁾ With this we disagree. The reference in the previous paragraph to the settlement of "Sectaries" in certain Kirks, and to Charteris gathering a congregation of Independents at Kilbryde surely proves that in this, as in other particulars, Ross is mistaken. We do not suggest that at this time there was anything like a general acceptance of Independent principles by the Scottish people. We do, however, hold that here and there individuals were converted to Congregationalism, and that up and down the Country Congregational Churches were started. We must remember that the sojourn of the English Army in Scotland was not merely a matter of weeks or months, - it lasted for 8 years. After Cromwell had fully established himself, the Army of occupation - never less than seven or eight thousand strong - was quartered in 18 garrison towns as well as in the Citadels of Leith, Perth, Ayr and Inverness/

(13) Ibid pp. 322-323

(14) Ibid p. 244 Eccl. Records of Abdn. pp. 222-23

(15) Ross p. 20.

Inverness. Most of these troops - officers and men - were Independents; some of them were Congregationalists, others of them were Baptists. Many of them were imbued with the missionary spirit and eager to win the Scots among whom they found themselves to their way of thinking.

That they were not without success at least with certain individuals we have evidence. On the eve of the English Invasion the General Assembly made the proud boast that "a Sectarie is (by the good hand of God upon the purity of His ordinances) so rare a thing in Scotland that we think few, or almost none can be named, in all the land⁽¹⁶⁾. In strange contrast is the lament of one Writer after the crushing defeat at Dunbar. Then as part explanation of that disaster, we are told of the opinion of some persons that there were in the Scottish Army "mony Independantis and Sectareis quho had too much relation and correspondence with General Cromwell"⁽¹⁷⁾. Even at this early period it would seem that the English Independents had been able, as the Kirk leaders had feared they would be, at least to weaken the allegiance of some to Presbyterianism. That such lapsed members were a considerable number is to be inferred from the Assembly's appointment that among other sinners to be prayed for at a solemn fast and humiliation on 13th April 1651 shall be those "who have fallen unto the wayes or errours of the enemies"⁽¹⁸⁾. Significant too, is the fact that about this time Colonel Archibald Strauchane, John Swintoun, William Dundas, Lieut. Robert Androw and/

(16) G.A. Comm. Records (1648-49) p. 448

(17) Nicoll p. 27

(18) G.A. Comm. Records 1650-52 p.343

and Lieut. William Given were excommunicated for their
 compliance with the Sectaries. ⁽¹⁹⁾ It may be that these
 then sympathised with ^{the} military rather than the religious
 purposes of Cromwell, but some ^{of} them - e.g. Swintoun
 and Dundas - ultimately went beyond that and became
 convinced Independents, who had to suffer for their
⁽²⁰⁾ convictions.

Progress, however, in the South was slow.
 Lilburne laments to Cromwell: "Ever in all these
 people there is a secrett antipathy at us, do what
 we can to oblige them, unless in some few that are
 convinced and those but few". ⁽²¹⁾ In the North con-
 ditions seem to have been more favourable. We hear
 of "a very precious people who seek the face of God
 in Sutherland and divers other parts beyond Inverness".
 When Deane marched into the Highlands news came from
 his forces that "some of the Highlanders have heard
 our preaching with great attention and groanings and
 seeming affection to it". Indeed so impressed are the
 folks in these parts that "they leave their own
 ministers, and come to private houses when our officers
 and soldiers meete together". ⁽²²⁾

From contemporary writers we gather that
 while elsewhere the reception to the army of Sectaries
 may not have been so encouraging, yet in other quarters
 in the North and among others than the Highlanders
 their ideas and beliefs were meeting with a certain
 measure of acceptance. Nicoll e.g. tells of certain
 ministers - "quho wer comptit most zealous and in
 much accompt and estimatioun among the ministrie" -
 urging upon the English Commanders circa October 1651
 that/

(19) Ibid pp. 214, 377

(20) Pittillok p. 13

(21) Scot. & Comm. p. 266

(22) Ibid pp. 31, 304.

that liberty of conscience be given to all the people, that all such be sent out to preach, whether English or Scots, that can divide the word aright and reduce the Church unto Apostolic doctrine. These ministers further request that the power of Presbyteries be reduced and kept from exercise, for it is, according to them, an anti-christian and tyrannical power; and their prayer is that the name of a National Church may perish from under Heaven and Britain. "These and much more" we are informed, "wer desyred to be put in practice"⁽²³⁾. A few months later from the same writer we learn of a certain malignant and independent party in the North who, being censured for their public sins, repudiate Presbyterianism. They contend that "of the bloodie and barbarous inconveniencies which hath always accompaneyed the Presbyteriall government" they have had sad experience, and declare that they will not continue members of the same. Henceforth they intend to live in a Gospel way "as the Lord hath dispensed in his sacred word". To testify this solemn separation⁽²⁴⁾ they have unanimously subscribed their names. How far these folk of the North kept to their resolution we have no trace, but the very fact that such a stand was taken, as also that such a plea was put forward by certain clergy, is significant. One does get the impression from these that the Scots were not so indifferent to the teaching and preaching of Cromwell's "booted apostles", as Ross and some others would have us believe.

Other and perhaps more convincing instances we have to support that conclusion. Baillie relates of some/

(23) Nicoll p. 63

(24) Ibid p. 91.

some in Fenwick in Ayrshire who about this time declared for Separation despite the arguments and entreaties of their minister who preached against it with tears. ⁽²⁵⁾ There are also the Aberdeen Separatists of whom from various sources we know a good deal. Among the prisoners taken at the Battle of Dunbar was Alexander Jaffray, the Provost of Aberdeen. In his "Diary" he relates, how, while a prisoner, he had frequent conversations "with the Lord General (Cromwell), L. Gen. (Lieutenant General Fleetwood), and Dr Owen". ⁽²⁶⁾ As a result of these conversations Jaffray was led to serious reflections first of all on the justification of the Scottish quarrel with the English. He had fought for the King and Covenant, but doubts now began to arise in his mind about both. He became convinced that he had "clear evidences of the Lord's controversey with the family and person of our King", and his faith in the wisdom and rightness of the Covenant began to waver. These questionings inevitably raised others about Church government; for what had prompted his zeal and that of the best men of the nation for the Covenant? A desire to maintain the doctrine, worship and government of the Kirk of Scotland had certainly had much to do with the contriving and carrying on of the Covenant. But if they had mistaken the mind and will of God concerning the one - and the dreadful appearance of God against them at Dunbar and the subsequent dissensions among themselves convinced him they had - might they not also have mistaken the mind and will of God about the other? Was Presbyterianism, as they claimed, the only way of Christ? This was the question that/

(25) Baillie III p. 193

(26) Diary of Alexander Jaffray p. 58.

that now forced itself upon him. After much thought and prayer he came to the conclusion that it was very far from being the only way of Christ. Were it "soberly managed" it might be an advance upon Episcopacy - so much he was prepared to allow. Beyond that, however, he would not go. After the most diligent search that he could make he could see in it "but a human invention composed with much prudence and policy of man's wit, fitted for those times when it had its rise in Geneva". Hitherto, he was led to conclude, men had been in the dark as to what was the divine will concerning the government and worship of the Church, these things having been given over into the hands of anti-christ,- but now the day was beginning to break through the clouds. Soon they would see what was the real mind of Christ concerning the constitution and government of His House.

On his return to Aberdeen Alexander Jaffray consulted with some of his friends and was surprised to find that several of them had been thinking on these very questions of the nature and government of the Church long before even a thought of them had arisen in his own mind. The outcome of these conversations was the expression of the desire to "have the ordinances administered in a more pure way, than there was any hope ever to attain to have them in the national way." They however, resolved that before proceeding to do so they would communicate their intention to some Christian friends and learn how they looked upon such an action. A letter was therefore drawn/

(27) Ibid pp. 59, 61, 62 & 63.

drawn up and sent to certain leading men of the
 south. ⁽²⁸⁾ (This as we have observed, is the document
 of which Whitelocke furnishes a summary, and which
 Orme, Fletcher and others erroneously describe as a
 declaration of the English Commissioners to the General
 Assembly "in favour of Congregational Discipline, the
 purity of Communion and toleration".) ⁽²⁹⁾ The letter
 opens with an acknowledgment that fear of offending
 their fellows has made them endure for long many things
 grievous to their spirits, but they can be silent no
 longer and must venture to set forth their thoughts.
 They are at variance with the Church as at present
 established in Scotland on two grounds. The first is
 on the question of the nature of the Church and the
 qualifications for Church membership. They are of
 the opinion that "none should be admitted as constituent
 members of the visible Church, but such as with a pro-
 fession of the Truth join such a blameless and Gospel
 like behaviour as they may be esteemed, in a rational
 judgment of Charity, believers and their children", for
 such were the Churches founded by the Apostles, which
 ought to be patterns for us. They are sure that
 "holiness becomes the house of our God", but the
 Churches of Scotland are "not constituted according
 to this rule in the full extent of it". They ^{if} con-
 sciences convince them that they are ^{Supra} under a share by
 reason of ~~their sinful~~ mixtures ^{being as they are}, and
 some of the most holy ordinances of Jesus Christ, as
 the sacrament of the Supper, they cannot partake of
 without sin. To them the call has come, "Come out
 from/

(28) Ibid p. 65

(29) Vide Supra p. 67

(30)

from among them and be ye separate".

Their second ground of objection to the Church of Scotland is on the question of polity. When first thoughts of questioning Presbyterial government came to them they did suppress them as temptations, but knowing that truth cannot lose by investigation, they "brought the matter to the balance of the sanctuary: and now we profess, so far as we can see, the congregational way comes nearer to the pattern of the word than our classical form. And to us it appears, that Christ has furnished a congregation with their elderships, with complete power of jurisdiction and censure within themselves." [Their claims they proceed to make good.] These views of Church polity they support by many Scriptural texts and other arguments. Alexander Jaffray, John Row, William Moore, John Meinzie and Andrew Birnie are the Signatories to this remarkable document which is dated 24th May 1652. (31)

According to Jaffray this letter caused no little stir in the South and the West. Many wrote them seeking to dissuade them from their purpose and beseeching them "not to fall on any such dividing way as they called it", until they should first meet and confer with them. This offer of a conference was accepted, and John Meinzie and Alexander Jaffray met several of the Church leaders in Edinburgh where they had discussions for several days together, but "in the end came to no other conclusion than formerly". The Church leaders, however, were not prepared to leave matters thus; they arranged for a further conference and/

(30) Wodrow MSS Fol. 30: 24: Diary of Alexander Jaffray pp. 167-169

(31) Wodrow MSS Fol. 30: 24: Diary of Alexander Jaffray pp. 169-71.

and sent Samuel Rutherford, James Guthrie, Patrick
(32)
Gillespie and John Carstairs as their spokesmen.

In September these came to Aberdeen and "for the space
of six dayes, they conferred and debaitted with
two ministers and sune regenttis in the College, in
the hearing of many that hankered" after Separation.

But it was all to no purpose. Jaffray "was much for
separatione", and others were just as convinced as he. (33)

Some weeks later therefore in the month of November
Jaffray and his friends carried out their original
intention and "did together partake of the ordinance
of the Supper of the Lord publicly in the meeting place
(34)
called Greyfriars".

(35)
(The Statement by Ross that Jaffray at this
time declared against "Separation" and departed from
the high ground he had at first taken is obviously
based on a misquotation by Waddington from Row's
Supplement to Blair's life. Jaffray did not return
to the Presbyterian Church but ultimately went by way
of Separatism to Quakerism. Vide "Diary of Alexander
Jaffray" pp. 98-99. Barclay's "Memoirs of People called
Quakers" p. 197).

Waddington and Ross in discussing this adherence
of some at Aberdeen to Separatist principles seek to
make out that the letter of 24th May 1652 by Jaffray,
Row and others caused the ecclesiastical authorities
to intervene not merely informally (as we have seen
they did) but even formally and to summon the sub-
(36)
scribers thereto before the courts of the Kirk. This
is/

(32) Diary of Alex. Jaffray pp. 65-66

(33) Row's "Blair" p. 66

(34) Diary of Alex. Jaffray p. 66

(35) Ross p. 22

(36) Ross p. 22: Waddington p. 501.

is not strictly accurate. There is e.g. no evidence that at this time Jaffray was brought before the Authorities (ecclesiastical or civil) for his religious views. Meinzie and Row, both of them ministers, certainly were dealt with by the Church Courts but their signing of the letter in question did not originate the proceedings against them. Only by a very incomplete study of the Kirk records could Ross and Waddington be led to believe that it did. What really happened was this. A month before the date of the letter to the godly men in the South, on April 23rd 1652, Row, whom the English Commissioners about this time appointed to the position of Principal of King's College, Old Aberdeen, presented a paper to the Synod of Aberdeen, which called for each presbytery and each minister in every presbytery carefully to revise the Acts of Assembly and other things ordered by the Reformers in relation to ministers of the Gospel, elders and deacons, public penitents, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper and lastly, what qualifications are required in a constituent member of a visible Kirk of Jesus Christ. ⁽³⁷⁾ Here was a distinct challenge to the Church which could not be ignored. From a letter to his brother we gather that in this question of the qualifications for Church membership Row was particularly interested and was most anxious that the Church of Scotland should adopt stricter Congregational ideas regarding the same. In this letter Row also writes that he has had frequent discussions with his Ministerial brethren on this subject/

(37) Eccl. Records of Abdn. p. 217.

subject, but they are very unsympathetic and he fears that he may have to suffer for the stand that he has taken "persecution, excommunication, loss of livelihood and what not". But "duties are ours, events the Lord's"⁽³⁸⁾.

The next move by the Synod was not therefore unexpected. The letter by Jaffray, Row and others may have brought home to the ecclesiastical authorities the extent to which Independent, Separatist principles were gaining ground and made them more alive to the dangers of the situation, but the challenge of Row both in private discussions and in a formal meeting of one of the Church Courts made action imperative, even had such a document never been penned. Such action the Synod of Aberdeen - the Court at which Row had raised these far reaching questions concerning the constitution of the Kirk - proceeded to take at its meeting on 30th June 1652. Every minister within the province was examined as to his judgment "anent the constitution and government of the Kirk of Scotland by sessions, presbyteries, provincially and general Assemblies" in "subordination one to another". Row, John Meinzies, Professor of Divinity at ~~King's College~~ and John Seton, Minister at Old Aberdeen, frankly stated their convictions in writing. They are not convinced, they declare, that there are to be found convincing scriptural grounds for "our classical subordination, with power of jurisdiction in poynt of censur. As to this constitution, we judge that our sinful mixtures and promiscuous administration of ordinances without due distinction between the precious and/

(38) Row's "Hist. of Kirk of Scot." Appendix III
pp. 533 et. seq.

and the vile, is not the least sinne of thie land
 for which the Lord is contending with us".⁽³⁹⁾ Such
 views from the Presbyterian point of view were heretical
 and schismatical. The Synod therefore without
 hesitation condemned the paper given in by Row,
 Meinzie and Seton as contrary to the word of God, to
 the covenants, and to the judgment of the General
 Assemblies of the Kirk; but they did not proceed to
 pass sentence of excommunication upon them, as they
 might have been expected to do. They suspended "thie
 centure of the said brethrene" till the case should
 be laid before the forthcoming General Assembly for
 its advice, but meantime the offending brethren were
 forbidden in public or in private to vent any doctrine
 or practise anything tending towards separation or
 against the present government of the Church.⁽⁴⁰⁾

The next relevant entry in the Church records
 is dated 21st October 1652 and refers to Row, Meinzie
 and Seton as having "separated themselves from the
 discipline and government of this Kirk to independen-
 cie." The Synod recommends that before entering into
 any strict course against them certain brethren be
 appointed to confer with them and "to informe them-
 selves what hopes may be intertained of their return-
 ing to the bosome of this Church". These efforts
 at reconciliation failed, for Row was out of town
 and Meinzie was of the same mind as at the last
 Assembly. The Synod therefore on the 22nd October
 referred the three brethren to the Presbytery of
 Aberdeen to be dealt with and proceeded against
 according/

(39) Eccl. Records of Abdn. p. 219

(40) Ibid p. 220.

(41)
 according to the Acts of the General Assembly.

Whether the Presbytery took action against them or not we do not know for no records of the Presbytery of Aberdeen for these years are known to exist. Very likely they did, but it would seem that the three brethren held on their Independent way. Certainly we know that so long as Cromwell was in power, Row and Meinzie were conspicuous for their adherence to Independency, although both rather ignominiously recanted and sought to win favour by espousing Episcopacy at the restoration of Charles II.

Row, Meinzie and Seton with Alexander Jaffray, the Provost of the City may have been - and probably were - the most influential and outstanding citizens of Aberdeen to ally themselves openly at this time with the tenets of Separatism, but there can be no question that there were others just as convinced as these. We believe that there was during the Cromwellian period a small gathered Church in Aberdeen.

(42)
 This of course is not the view put forward by Ross. If we understand him rightly, the Separatist movement in Aberdeen ended with the communion service in Greyfriars Church, the intervention of the authorities causing Jaffray and those associated with him to depart from the high ground they had taken. This, however, ignores the fact that for some time after this date we come across in the Kirk records references to the Separatists at Aberdeen. The Commission of the General Assembly at its meeting of 28th May 1653 recommends to the Presbytery of Aberdeen "to proceed"

(41) Ibid. p. 222: Row's "Hist. of Kirk of Scot." p. xlix. 23

(42) Ross pp. 22-23.

proceed against the Separatists that are there and
to report ane accompt thereof to the next Assembly".⁽⁴³⁾

This is some seven months after Row, Meinzie and Seton were to be dealt with and some six months after the meeting in Greyfriars Church. One is therefore driven to the conclusion that the Separatist movement in Aberdeen had greater strength and longevity than Ross would have us believe. When one remembers that in these days Cromwell was in the flush of his power and that the Independent tenets were promulgated and protected by him and his troops, while the General Assembly was forbidden to meet, one realises that the censure and anathemas of the Kirk against those inclined to Separatist ways would cause little concern, that conditions were indeed decidedly in their favour.

Nor is this the only reference to the continuation of Separatist activities in Aberdeen. There has also been preserved a "Christlie and brotherlie exhortatioun and warning from many Ministers and Professors of the Gospell" of the same year (1653) to "some of their brethren at Aberdene and to all others within the land who being members of this Kirk have already declined or do anieway incline to the wayes of Separation". In this exhortation reference is made to the many efforts, personal and literary, that have been made to prevent the Aberdeen brethren withdrawing from the fellowship of the Kirk but all in vain. It is plain therefrom that the brethren in Aberdeen have definitely withdrawn and organised themselves/

(43) G.A. Comm. Records (1650-52) pp. 549-50.

selves as a company outside the national Church and there is a fear that others may be induced by their example to do likewise. (44) There is a further reference to "Separated and gathered Congregations" which indicate that such a Congregation had been started at (45) Aberdeen.

In Jaffray's Diary, too, there are references which indicate that the Separatist movement in Aberdeen did not end in 1652. In the year 1657 he speaks of his separation from those with whom formerly he walked in fellowship at Aberdeen and goes on to say, referring to the baptism of his child, "If I could I should have thought it my duty rather to have chosen it (the Aberdeen fellowship) than any other". Clearly then there was in 1657 a Separatist Company meeting in Aberdeen for worship and the administering of the (46) Sacraments - in other words a gathered Church. Later - on August 15th 1658 - Jaffray mentions the death of Mr James Duram who carried on the work of God in Aberdeen among the "handful who fear Him" there, - and his prayer is that the work of the Gospel and the administering of the ordinances may not suffer by Mr Duram's parting but that God "may be pleased to point out (47) some other way". We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that Separatist activities continued in Aberdeen throughout the Commonwealth, that a small gathered Church was then brought into existence and had some few years of useful life.

That "gathered Churches" there were elsewhere than in Aberdeen we are not without evidence. Jaffray,

e.g. ④

(44) Consult. of Ministers of Edin. (1652-57) pp. 39-40

(45) Ibid p. 41

(46) Diary of Alex. Jaffray p. 99

(47) Ibid p. 118

e.g. in his "Diary" explains that he is not a member of any gathered Church, but indicates that there are such up and down the Country. In the "Warning and Exhortation" of 1653 to which reference has already been made, there are also several passages which support our contention. In one place we read of some who have "Separated utterlie from us". "Wee know", we are told on another page, "there is much alleadged of the vigour and growth of the grace of God upon some separated and gathered Congregations". There is also a statement about "the evils of the congregational way" which is new to those who are experimenting with it, so that they "see little or no thing at first of the evill of it". Singly and together these surely point to the existence of Independent Churches in Scotland about this time.

That, indeed, as early as 1652 a few gathered Churches had been formed we have evidence more direct and conclusive. A letter from Edinburgh, dated 20th November 1652 makes mention of them. "The Gathered Churches in Scotland", the writer relates, "go on so successfully, that many who derided them, begin to admire them and love them, and there seems to be an expectation of the Glory of the Lord's Temple, to be more illustrious in the ruins of the earthly Monarchs, than any of the worldly Crownes and Scepters will ever nurse up in their protections."

Robert Pittillok in his "Hammer of Persecution", published in 1659, furnishes the names of eight ministers who became converts to Independency about this period and/

(48) Ibid p. 98

(49) Consult. of Ministers of Edin. (1652-57) pp. 43, 41.

(50) Scot & Comm. p. 370.

and complains that they were not sufficiently protected and favoured by the Government, and that after Cromwell became Protector they were even entirely discouraged. "Before this day", he declares, there had been thousands in Scotland separated from the National Church, who would have jeopardised their lives for the godly in England, "if they had met with that freedom and encouragement which justly they expected when first the English came to Scotland".⁽⁵¹⁾

Elsewhere we come across this complaint that little encouragement is given from headquarters, Lilburne, writing from Dalkeith on 16th April 1653, speaks of the gathered Churches as making progress. "Divers are become Members", but he adds, "Many more would if meanes were not wanting amongst them".⁽⁵²⁾ Further indication of the existence of Independent Churches we have in two letters from General Monk to the Protector. The first, dated 19th September 1654, speaks of "sundry Congregationall Ministers in Scotland" and expresses the hope that they may be encouraged by Cromwell" to goe on in that good worke which they have begun, which may much tend to the advantage of the Kingdome of Jesus Christe, and promote the interest of your Highnesse,⁽⁵³⁾ and the Commonwealth of England in this nation". In the second, dated 3rd October 1654, there is an expression of humble thanks from "the Ministers of the Congregationall Churches".⁽⁵⁴⁾ The Commissioners from the Parliament of England were authorised to provide out of the treasury of vacant stipends, or otherwise, a competent maintenance for such Ministers who had gathered

Congregations/

(51) Pittillok pp. 10, 13

(52) Scot. & Comm. p. 123

(53) Scot. & The Protectorate p. 185

(54) Ibid p. 193

Congregations in Scotland. The thanks of the Congregational Ministers are therefore, we take it, an acknowledgment of salary received.

Independency then did make some headway in Scotland during the period of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate. Not only were individuals here and there led to a consideration and acceptance of Independent ideas and beliefs, but some Churches after the Independent pattern were formed. Were, however, such Congregations what we today recognise as Congregational Churches? We cannot be sure that in every case they were, for in those days the terms "Independent" and "Separatist" were used to describe both Congregationalists and Baptists. That, however, some of the "congregated" or "gathered" Churches were Congregational and not Baptist we can be fairly certain, for the Independent Soldiers of Cromwell's Army were just as zealous in preaching their faith as the Baptists and converts they must have made and did make. The company of Separatists at Aberdeen were certainly Congregationalists. There is no hint either in their own writings or in their opponents' that they were tainted with the errors of Anabaptism. Of the Congregational character of one other Church we have definite proof.

Pittillok, writing of ^{the} "Congregated Churches" in Scotland informs us that there are two such Churches in Edinburgh and Leith, "one of Independents, another of

⁽⁵⁵⁾
Baptists". Other purely Congregational Churches there most probably were, but two Congregational Churches - one in Aberdeen, the other in Edinburgh - there certainly were as early as 1652.

Our/

Our contention has been that the Scottish people were not so indifferent to the teaching and preaching of Cromwell's Soldiers, as some would have us believe. Some we hold, were won to Independency, and small "Gathered Churches" were brought into being in various parts of the land. Independency, however, did not sweep the country. When the English Army returned to England, the great majority of the population were as devoted to Presbyterianism as they had been when the soldiers first came. To not a few it has been a matter of wonder that the presence of Cromwell's soldiers did not give a very much greater impetus to the spread of Independent principles in Scotland.

Lack of support by Cromwell, of which we have heard, has been put forward as the explanation of the comparatively meagre fruits of his soldiers' missionary zeal. May it not have been the case, that, as time went on, Cromwell saw very clearly that there was little hope of converting Scotland to Congregationalism, that anything like interference on his part would arouse the jealousy of the Presbyterian Church and add to the numerous difficulties which beset him in the government of the country? We are not at all sure that had Cromwell possessed the spirit of a prosleytiser and supported to the utmost of his ability and power the labours of his troops in the interests of Independency, the result would have been more considerable. The nature of the Scottish people has to be taken into account. They were, and are, a proud - not to say a stiff necked people. How could such a people be prevailed upon to take/

take their religion from the hands of their conquerors?

We must remember too, how closely Presbyterianism was linked with the life and liberty of the Scottish people. Presbyterianism from the days of Knox & Melville had done much for the Scots in securing emancipation from tyranny civil and ecclesiastical. To almost incessant aggression they had been exposed for long. How could they be expected to split hairs about modes of Church government or be disposed to do anything but look askance at all new fangled systems which threatened to displace what they had come to regard as the bulwark of their liberties? Not only so, but it has to be remembered that it was only through the Presbyterian religion that there was for long any recognition of popular rights of any kind. Scotland politically was far behind England at this time. The General Assembly was then practically the only Parliament of the people, the one form of popular representation which the nation had. Presbyterianism had come to be intertwined with what was most sacred and precious in the eyes of the people and was able to put at a decided disadvantage every competing form of Church polity - more especially that offered them by their conquerors. In such circumstances greater success than the English Independents had could hardly be expected.

V. THE GLASITES.

The departure of the English Army of occupation from Scotland on New Year's Day 1660, emptied the "gathered Churches" of their leading members, and the native element remaining was so scant that the Churches entirely disappeared. The smallness of their numbers, their lack of leaders, and their isolated, scattered condition made their continued existence, more especially in the face of opposition from the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, well nigh impossible. A few who had been won to Independency, we know, became absorbed in quakerism after the Restoration, but the majority of the members of the "gathered Churches", it would seem, drifted back to the National Church, and for many a long day the land was undisturbed by the errors and extravagancies of Independency.

The day, however, did come when Independency appeared again upon the scene in a notable and historic form. Some sixty five years measure the gap between the eclipse of the Independent Congregational order at the close of the Cromwellian period and its reappearance at the end of the first quarter of the Eighteenth Century. It was inevitable that thinking men of spiritual character should find their way back to New Testament principles and seek to make practice accord with conviction. The differentia of the return is that Congregationalism on this occasion was not transplanted but grown from seed and afterwards was carried to England and America.

John/

John Glas, through whose action Independency was revived in Scotland in the early Eighteenth Century, was born at Auchtermuchty on September 21st 1695, and was ordained and inducted to the rural parish of Tealing, some five miles from Dundee, in the year 1719. He had not entered the ministry without a profound sense of its responsibility, and from the first his pulpit ministrations were characterised by an intense earnestness. He seems to have been an attractive and powerful preacher, for to the services in his own Church folks flocked from neighbouring parishes, and when he went to assist brother ministers at communion seasons he invariably obtained large congregations. Long sermons were then the rule and the Minister of Tealing gave full measure, but his hearers did not weary; he could ^{keep} up the attention of his audience for two or three hours together. (1)

To the Church of Scotland Glas was attached by family and personal ties, and at the time of his ordination and for some years afterwards gave to Presbytery [and Covenant] a loyal and unquestioning obedience. "I had not then considered" he says referring to these early years, "the controversy betwixt the Presbyterians and them of the Congregational way; but took up the common report against the Congregational Business, that it is mere confusion, and was the mother of all the Sectaries further I thought I saw a subordination of church courts in the 15 chapter of the Acts, without considering whether it was this National Subordination or something else, or whether it was a stated Subordination or occasional only;/"

(1) Wilson: "Dissenting Chs." III p.270.

only; or whether there was a discipline in the case or not Thus I thought myself a sound Presbyterian and accordingly declared myself so by subscribing the formula⁽²⁾. It was the zeal of certain of his parishioners for the Covenants, their glorifying of the former covenanting days and their prophesying of great days to come by the revival of the Covenants that first set Glas pondering on the nature of Christ's Kingdom and the difference between the Old Testament and the New. He resolved, if possible, to be at the bottom of this controversy and further that it should be determined to him "by the word of the Lord Jesus, and by that only"⁽³⁾, but this was to lead to results that he then did not and could not foresee, even the forsaking of Presbyterianism and the state Church and standing force for Independency and Voluntarism.

As the result of diligent and prolonged study Glas came to these conclusions, which he later defended before the Church Courts and gave to the world in his first and greatest work "The Testimony of the King of Martyrs" (1729): National Christianity is not New Testament Christianity; there is^{no} authority in the New Testament for either the National Covenant or the solemn league and Covenant; a National Church is equally without New Testament authority; magistrates as such have no function in Christ's Church and have no right to punish for heresy; the use of political and secular weapons as a means of reformation instead of Christ's word and spirit is wrong. These conclusions, novel and startling then in Covenanting, Presbyterian Scotland, he did not keep/

(2) Preface to "Continuation of the Narrative" pp. vii, viii.

(3) Glas "Narrative" pp. 3. 5.

keep to himself; they began to appear in his preaching, and were stoutly opposed by upholders of the Covenants, who did not hesitate to decry both the new doctrine and its author. His own father branded him Ishmael, and declared, "His hand was against every man and every man's hand against him". He was the first who told him he was an Independent; while his father-in-law said, "He was fighting in vain, for what he aimed at never could take place"⁽⁴⁾. Some of his parishioners, however, after a time embraced his views, and these Glas began to separate from the multitude, and so to form a little society - really a Congregational Church.- in his own Parish. Their number according to the first roll of their names, which is dated Tealing 13th July 1725, amounted to nearly one hundred. At this meeting they joined together in the Christian profession and promised to follow Christ the Lord and to walk together in brotherly love. At this meeting - not, as Ross states, at a subsequent meeting -⁽⁵⁾ it was also agreed to observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper monthly. At their next meeting, on 12th August, several new members were received, and Christ's law for removing offences, Matthew XVIII, being laid before them they professed subjection to it. On the 9th December they decided that at all their public meetings a collection should be taken for their own poor and for such Christians in other places as were in straitened circumstances; and at a later meeting they recommended brethren who were nearest each other to form themselves into/

(4) Account of Life & Char. of John Glas (1813) pp. ix, x.

(5) Ross p. 26.

into societies and to have a meeting weekly for prayer
(6)
and mutual exhortation.

Ross suggests that it was because Tealing was a small parish that Glas was able to proceed undisturbed with such innovations in doctrine and practice, and that but for a chance encounter with a champion of the Covenants he might have continued them without opposition for a long
(7)
time. But Tealing is not in some remote Highland Glen. It is five miles at the most from the City of Dundee, and of the Presbytery of Dundee the minister of Tealing is - and was - a member. Glas' principles and divisive practices were very soon known far beyond the bounds of his parish and war against them hinted at from several
(8)
pulpits. Moreover, it would seem that his encounter with John Willison of Dundee was no accident, but according to the planning of his opponents. Had they not found this opportunity of making Glas declare himself and so furnish material for a charge before the Church Courts they would have found another. They did not intend to leave him to go on in his chosen way without being called in question. The course, however, that events did take was this. On 6th August 1726, being the fast day before the sacrament at Strathmartine (now a Suburb of Dundee) both Glas and Willison were engaged to preach there and from all parts of the country a great concourse of people had assembled. Several ministers attempted to effect a reconciliation between the two preachers before the service commenced. Willison agreed that if Glas would be silent/

(6) Account of Life & Char. of John Glas pp. x, xi.

(7) Ross p. 27

(8) ? Account . . .

silent on the subject of the Covenants, he would also; but this Glas declined to promise. He realised that if he did preach, there would be no evading the issue, but he was none too anxious to give his opponents the desired materials for a charge against him. He therefore asked the minister of the parish to find a substitute, but none of the Ministers present (whatever were the motives that actuated them) would take his place; and so he was obliged to go forward. Glas took for his text John VI. 39, "And we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God", and in the unfolding of his theme was led to speak of Christ's Kingdom and the nature of it. Without hesitation he proclaimed his own beliefs about that Kingdom and publicly confessed his faith that it is not a wordly Kingdom, and that it is not set up, advanced or defended as the Kingdoms of this world by human policy, or human eloquence, or wordly force and power. "I confess" he concluded, "my adherence to our fathers and martyrs in their testimony for the Kingdom of Christ in opposition to any earthly head of the Church not appointed by the Lord Christ; and thus I acknowledge them to be the martyrs of Jesus; but as far as they contended for any national covenants, as whereby Christ's Kingdom should be of this world (his church and the world mingled together, and his people who are of the truth, and hear his voice, divided from one another) and such as he hath not appointed under the New Testament, but set aside so far they were not enlightened".

Such/

(9) Ibid xi-xiv.

Such an utterance was too public and too remarkable in itself to be overlooked and disregarded by a champion of the Covenants like Mr Willison. At the next meeting of the Presbytery of Dundee on 7th September 1726, he charged Glas with opposing the doctrine and authority of the Church and the martyrs in his sermon at Strathmartine and mentioned an act of Assembly enjoining the deposition of ministers who spoke against the Covenants.⁽¹⁰⁾ So began the lengthy proceedings against Glas which culminated in his deposition by the Synod of Angus and Mearns on 16th April 1728, which deposition after Glas' appeal against it was confirmed by the Commission of the General Assembly on March 12th 1730. It is difficult to see how the Commission could have taken any other action, for Glas had definitely stated before the Synods of Angus and Mearns as his opinion that "there is no warrant for a National Church under the New Testament", and that "a congregation or church of Jesus Christ with its presbytery, is, in its discipline, subject to no jurisdiction under heaven".⁽¹¹⁾ Beliefs such as these are scarcely compatible with membership of a state established Presbyterian Church. It is, indeed, surprising that Glas should have struggled so long to retain his position as a minister of the Church of Scotland, that he did not realise that he was acting on principles quite inconsistent with his remaining in that body. Equally surprising is the action of the Assembly nine years later, (when Glas had drifted even/

(10) Ibid p. xvi.

(11) Queries put to Mr Glas 15, 19.

even further away from Presbyterianism and indicated no desire to return to the National Church) in reconsidering his case and recognising him as a minister of the Gospel, though not a minister of the Church of Scotland.

For a time after his deposition Glas remained in Tealing ministering to the Church he had formed in 1725, but ere long he removed to Dundee where some who had been wont to come to Tealing on Sundays formed the nucleus of a second congregation. The one principle by which Glas and his followers from this time onwards were guided seems to have been to make their Churches approximate in detail to the order and discipline of the primitive Church. This led first of all to the abandonment of the monthly communion for a weekly observance of the Supper, since on the first day of the week the first disciples came together for the breaking of bread.⁽¹²⁾ A more careful consideration of the constitution of the primitive Churches disclosed this further fact that in every one of them there was a plurality of elders, or bishops, called overseers.⁽¹³⁾ Glas had, therefore, to have a colleague. The elder chosen was Mr Archibald, the Minister of Guthrie, who had followed in that parish the practices Glas had adopted in Tealing. The possibility of forming other Churches was raised, but the question was, How could elders for these new causes be secured? This led to a study of the qualifications required for the eldership as laid down by Paul in his epistles to Timothy and Titus./

(12) Glas. Works V. "The Lord's Supper": II p. 238

(13) Ibid I. 192: II p. 213.

Titus. Glas and his followers found there no mention of a university education, or of the necessity of understanding the learned languages, but an insistence upon character. They saw some of their brethren in possession of the characters laid down by the Apostle, and therefore "to their conviction, able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers". These after fasting and praying (once again according to the custom of the primitive Churches), they accordingly appointed.⁽¹⁴⁾

About the year 1736 Glas was joined by Robert Sandeman, who had been intended for one of the learned professions but after two years at college had returned to Perth, his native city, and entered on a business career. He married Glas's daughter and became an elder in the Glasite Church which had been formed in Perth in 1733. After some years there he removed to Dundee, and afterwards to Edinburgh. In 1757 Sandeman brought his party into notice, particularly in England, by his letters on Hervey's "Theron & Aspasio". This work gave great offence to many, for it was not simply a critique of Hervey's book but a scathing attack on all the popular writers and preachers of his time and a spirited, provocative exposition of Sandeman's own theological position, but to this we shall return later.

Churches formed by Glas and Sandeman sprang up in various parts of Scotland. Much opposition they had to encounter, but the Glasites themselves were partly to blame. It is true that the Scottish people for the/

(14) Account of Life & Char. of Glas. p. xv.

the most part in the first half of the 18th century were inclined to look askance at these experiments in primitive Christianity but the acrimony and bitterness which the followers of Glas attacked all other religious parties and professions did not make things easier for them. When first an attempt was made to start a Church in Perth the ministers preached against the Glasites with great violence, and even endeavoured to enlist the aid of the magistrates to suppress them while a lawless mob, which the town clerk succeeded in dispensing, threatened to set fire to their place of meeting. A certain lady in the height of her religious zeal, on seeing Glas walk in a street in Perth was heard to say, "Why do they not rive him to pieces?"⁽¹⁵⁾ As has happened so often before and since, persecution only promoted the cause it was intended to destroy. Considerable progress was made both in Scotland and in England. Two Ministers of the Church of Scotland - Mr Byers of St. Boswells and Mr Ferrier of Largo - joined the movement, as did several English Independent Ministers. Sandeman in 1760 went to London and attracted considerable congregations. At St. Martins le Grand a Sandemanian Society or Church was started, of which the most illustrious member was that scientific genius, Michael Faraday. In some parts of the north of England, too, societies were formed and for a time prospered.

The fame of Sandeman's writings having reached America, he received an invitation to visit that Country. With/

(15) Wilson' Dissenting Chs. III p. 270: Acct. of life & Char. of Glas xlvi, xlvii.

With this request he complied and undertook the voyage in 1764, accompanied by two of his brethren, one of whom was James Cargil, a glover, who had attracted much notice as the first unclerical, unlearned man who dared to preach and exercise the office of a teaching elder. ⁽¹⁶⁾

In America Sandeman laboured till his death in 1770 and not altogether in vain, for he succeeded in erecting several Churches, particularly in New England, where his sentiments most gained ground. Glas died at Dundee in 1773, after he had buried all his fifteen children, and had survived the greater part of the difficulties and opposition he had been called to encounter. Up to this period and perhaps for a short time after, the Glasite or Sandemanian Churches continued to increase. Before the end of the century, however, decline had set in.

Internal dissensions had something to do with this. A controversey arose in 1798 about assurance, which divided the Churches all over the country into two and in some cases three distinct parties who would hold no intercourse with one another and all attempts at reconciliation ⁽¹⁷⁾ proved ineffectual.

Not only many individuals but several Glasite Churches separated from their brethren at this time, and the losses were never made up. One, writing less than twenty years later (1819), expressed the belief that "the period is probably at no great distance, when a Glasite Church will be a curiosity in this island", ⁽¹⁸⁾ from which we gather that the decline had been rapid. It would appear that less than a century after the inauguration of the movement it was threatened with/

[16] Bogue and Bennet: Dissenters iv. p. 123

[17] Wilson's Dissenting Chs. III pp. 264-266

[18] Orme in "London Christian Instructor" (1819) p.92

with extinction. Certainly today a Glasite Church is something of a curiosity. There linger on, we understand, small Churches of that order in Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee, and there may be one or two more, but they are few in number and small in membership and play no part in the religious life of the land. The Congregationalism of John Glas and Robert Sandeman has become attenuated and at the last gasp.

The doctrine of the Glasite Churches, more especially as developed and propounded by Sandeman, and their practices to which all must conform, we are, convinced, are largely responsible for their decline and disappearance. Sandeman in his letters on Hervey's "Theron & Aspasio", to which we have already referred, endeavours to show that Hervey's notion of faith is contradictory to the Scriptural account, and proceeds to set forth his own beliefs. These are really an elaboration of Glas's, for the letters contain almost nothing but what Glas had published before. Sandeman, however, wrote with a degree of ability and spirit which Glas did not possess. His position is that faith is neither more nor less than a simple assent to the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, delivered for the offences of men and raised again for their justification. "Every one", says Sandeman, "who obtains a just notion of the person and work of Jesus Christ, or whose notion corresponds to what is testified by him, is justified, and finds peace with God simply by that notion". Again, "The bare work of Jesus Christ which he finished on the Cross is/

(19) Letters on Theron And Aspasio I. p. 483.

is sufficient without a deed or thought on the part of man, to present the chief of sinners spotless before God".⁽²⁰⁾

The people of Scotland, who had been accustomed to consider saving faith not only as a receiving of Christ with the understanding, but also as a resting upon Christ with the heart for salvation were startled by such propositions. They could not understand Sandeman's argument that everything like wish or desire to be saved is excluded from entering into the nature of faith, that faith consists solely in intellectual assent, in the fact of Christ's atoning death standing true to the mind. Had it not been for these views and the spirit in which they were profounded (Sandeman denounced the most venerated of the divines of his day as corrupters of the truth and their teaching as a devout path to hell) the probability is that Glasite and Sandemanian Churches would have greatly multiplied throughout Scotland. Sandeman's theology, however, coupled with an austere discipline, militated against that and was sufficient to confine Sandemanism within narrow boundaries.

Certain of the practices by which Glas and Sandeman are distinguished from other Christians we have already noticed. Their ideal is, Churches which shall be replicas of the New Testament Churches and to achieve ^{this} these they followed, and follow where they still exist, many novel practices. They have not only weekly communion, but also love feasts at which every member is not only permitted but required to be present, and which consists in dining, either in the vestry of their meeting place, or at each other's house, in the interval between the morning and afternoon service. They have the kiss of/

[20) Ibid p. 276.

of charity at the admission of a new member, and at other times when they think proper, while at one time the members washed each other's feet. Abstinence from blood and things strangled as food is enjoined. Church decisions are never by a majority but must be unanimous. If the minority decline to fall in with the majority and so make unanimity possible they are expelled, for the voice of the Church having been expressed ~~they are~~ now regarded as contumacious. The accumulation of wealth they regard as unscriptural and wrong. Each considers his property liable to be called on for the poor or the needs of the Church. Public and private amusements are allowed so far as they are not considered really sinful; but apprehending a lot to be sacred, they disapprove of letteries, card playing

&c.

Each Church must have a plurality of elders, pastors or bishops, and two elders must be present at every act of discipline, and at the administration of the Lord's supper. Want of learning is no bar to the eldership but second marriage disqualifies for the office. They have not only deacons, who provide for the temporal wants of the Church, but also deaconesses chosen from among the aged widows of the Church. On the subject of baptism they approve of the baptism of children of believers whether members of their Churches or not. Sandeman condemned those who oppose infant baptism with all his characteristic bitterness, while Glas taught that baptism is a token of admission into the Catholic Church, as the Lord's Supper is a sign of communion with a particular congregation.⁽²¹⁾ A further prominent/

(21) Wilson, "Dissenting Chs." III pp. 264, 265: Marsden, "Hist. of Christian Chs." II p. 297: Bogue & Bennet, "Dissenters" IV pp. 110, 299.

prominent feature of the system is its exclusive and separating character. A genuine Glasite has no intercourse of a religious nature with any other individual who bears the Christian name. He will refuse to pray with you, says Fuller, but will have no objection to accompanying you to the theatre. (22)

Glas sought in the Churches he brought into being to reproduce New Testament Christianity, but his ecclesiastical system judged not by the letter, but by the Spirit of the New Testament must be found wanting and Sub-Christian. It certainly preserves something of the external form of primitive Christianity, but it is such a resemblance as a skeleton bears to a human being. It is cold, repulsive, and cadaverous. It wants the flesh, the loveliness, and the animating principle.

Like other movements of the kind, that initiated by Glas, as Ross points out (23) did not fulfil its early promise, but we must not on that account dismiss his witness as in vain. His views of Church order and discipline influenced and were to a considerable extent adopted by many who repudiated his doctrinal position. The old Scotch Baptists and the societies in connection with Robert and James Haldane after they became Baptists in 1808, were according to the Glasite plan, although in both cases the leaders denied that they were Glasites. There is no doubt that Glas's writings on the nature of the Church were familiar to many who formed the earliest of our modern Scottish Congregational Churches and that his teaching influenced them towards Congregationalism. (24)

But more important still is it to remember that Voluntaryism, which agitated Scotland for well-nigh

two/

(22) Fuller's "Works" p. 286

(23) Ross p. 30

(24) Patrick Hutcheson "The Messiah's Kingdom" p.178

two hundred years, originated with John Glas. The peculiarities of his ecclesiastical system prevented it from growing, but he influenced strongly the early apologists of the Relief Church and through them the religious life of Scotland. "I esteem it a ground of humiliation and mourning before God" said Patrick Hutcheson the authoritative expounder of the Relief, "that so many in these lands swore those oaths (of the Covenants) in which there were sundry things unlawful to be sworn, and other things which not one hundred (25) of the whole British subjects sufficiently understood". The civil magistrate has nothing to do with the religious beliefs of his subjects; The meanest subject in the State has as good a right to judge in the matters of religion for himself as the prince for the throne - these were convictions for which the founders of the Relief Church stood and which they thundered forth again and again. Glas, however, had said the very same and suffered for it years before. More indebted were they to him than at first sight appears. They took the outlines of his system, but not his crotchets. The historian of their Church does not exaggerate when he says that had Glas and his followers "united the suavity of the Gospel with their spiritual views of the Messiah's Kingdom there would have been little room (26) for the Relief".

(25) Philip's, J. Campbell p. 281

(26) Struthers, "Hist. of Relief Ch." p. 179.

VI. THE OLD SCOTS INDEPENDENTS.

In 1768 a new movement arose in Scotland which came to be known as that of the Old Scots Independents. In doctrine and polity this new body had much in common with John Glas and his followers, but happily they were free from the somewhat harsh and uncharitable spirit of the Glasites.

Any attempt to outline the history and progress of this body of Independents must begin with the Rev. Henry Davidson, Minister of Galashiels from 1714 till his death in 1756, and the Rev. Gabriel Wilson, Minister of the Parish of Maxton about the same time, for while these did not bring the movement into being, forecasts of it can be found in their action. Davidson and Wilson who were fast friends, lived and died ministers of the Church of Scotland. The Assembly of 1732, however, by its restoration of patronage and other high handed measures so disgusted them that they renounced sacramental Communion with the Established Church. They continued to preach, baptise, and catechise in their respective Churches and parishes, but from this time onwards they declined to dispense the Sacrament of the Supper to their people. They actually started circa 1736 a Congregational Church at Maxton, and there they had communion on Sunday evenings when Davidson could go down from Galashiels. So they continued for more than twenty years, no man forbidding them. ⁽¹⁾ It was a most extraordinary situation. Though in the Church of Scotland they were not/

(1) T. Brown's "Gospel Truth" (1831) pp. 163 et. seq.

not of it; guilty they certainly were of disobedience, yet they never were expelled nor libelled for following divisive purposes, to the end their irregularity was winked at. When both Davidson and Wilson had passed away, the Church founded by them on the Congregational plan continued to meet, and the remains of it formed a connection with the Old Scots Independents after their appearance.

Two ministers of neighbouring parishes in Fife - James Smith of Newburn and Robert Ferrier of Largo - were the founders of the Old Scots Independents. Smith was born in Aberdeenshire in the closing years of the Seventeenth or the opening of the Eighteenth Century and after completing his course at Aberdeen University settled in the Parish of Newburn in 1735. From the first he commended himself to his people both as a preacher and pastor, and to the end of his ministry among them seems to have been held in affection and esteem. He married in 1746 or 1747, but a few years after the marriage he lost his wife and one of his two sons, and from that time onwards he seems to have become something of a recluse. While in this state, Sandeman's letters on Hervey's "Theron & Aspasio" came into his hands, and made so profound an impression on him that his views regarding the Kingdom of Christ underwent a great change. His conversion, however, to the Sandemanian position was very gradual, and he did not immediately cut himself adrift from the National Church. He contented himself at the outset with dispensing the Lord's Supper once

a month instead of once a year and without the assistance of other ministers which formerly he invariably had had. To this no objection was raised by his own people or by the presbytery, and so he quietly went on for some years. Becoming, however, more and more dissatisfied with the Established Church he at last demitted his Charge on August 17th 1768.⁽²⁾ Robert Ferrier, the minister of Largo, Smith's partner in the founding of the Old Scots Independents, was a much younger man, being only about twenty seven years of age when he broke away from the Established Church. Ferrier afterwards declared that he had first been set thinking on the matter by a brother minister who on his death bed said to him "with bitter anguish and regret, he lamented as a dying man, in view of the judgment seat, that he had stifled his convictions, which he had received from the word of God; and contrary to the dictates of his conscience had stood connected with the National Church" and asked him to examine Glas's "King of Martyrs" and compare it with the Scriptures.⁽³⁾ This request of his dying friend Ferrier obeyed and the consequence was his acceptance of Glas's beliefs which led him, after conversations with Smith, to resign his charge.

The resignations of Smith and Ferrier were not at first accepted. The Presbytery in the hope that they might be made to see the error of their ways appointed a Committee to confer^{with} them, but the two brethren, while open to conviction on certain points, persisted in their notions with respect to Church Government.⁽⁴⁾ Their demissions, therefore, after some discussion were accepted on/

(2) London Christian Instructor (1819) p. 411.

(3) Ferrier's Preface to "King of Martyrs" p. 15

(4) Scots Magazine xxx p. 644

on the ground that great tenderness had already been exercised towards them. Smith and Ferrier in their "Case" which they published state frankly their position. Like all other Ministers of the Church of Scotland, they say, they had signed the formula affirming their belief in the doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith as "the truth of God, founded upon and agreeable to the word of God" and in the "government of the Church by Kirk sessions, presbyteries, provincial synods, and general assemblies as founded upon and agreeable to that word. But they have lately received other views of the matter; honesty, therefore, demands that they retract their subscription, resign their charges, and renounce the livings annexed thereto, "as without the subscription we could not have been in connection with the charge or with the benefice". They are under no delusion as to what their action means for them. "We also", they say, "were not so insensible even to temporal interests as, for what we accounted a matter of small moment, to have renounced so convenient and liberal a living as we were in possession of, without any prospects as to this world, unless perhaps the voluntary contribution of a few Christians, mostly in but narrow circumstances, of whom we have never sought, nor have, nor would have accepted, any other security than their love of truth. But the holding a living, however ~~con-~~ convenient,, however liberal, and by a tenure however sure, at the expense of giving up any truth of God, or of professing otherwise than we think in our hearts, we were, and are of opinion, would have been in itself base and in a particular manner displeasing unto Him who is the

Lord/

Lord God of truth (Ps. xxxi. 5) and who desires truth in the inward parts (Ps. Li. 6). We endeavoured, therefore, to renounce with cheerfulness, for we dare not resist, but must yield, when the truth strikes, let the consequences be what they will".⁽⁵⁾ As Ferrier wrote several years later "After many a painful struggle to sit still and eat our loaf contentedly, we were obliged to resign our livings and bid adieu to the Establishment".⁽⁶⁾

When their "Case" was published as an attempt to correct the gross misrepresentations which were afloat concerning their conduct in leaving the Church of Scotland, John Glas, considering that they had really accepted his scheme, made overtures to them, but these were rejected. Smith "refused so much as to hold conversation with him" as he had "a noted dislike at him" and his Churches.⁽⁷⁾ Ferrier, however, afterwards joined Glas and held office in the Glasite Churches in Glasgow and Edinburgh for a time, but from the latter was ultimately expelled.

The first Church of the new movement was started at Balchristie in Smith's parish, and the original members were a few of both their congregations who had adhered to them. Smith and Ferrier were in due course ordained there as "elders", and ere long there were some sixty to eighty members. The second Church was formed in Glasgow. About the very time that Ferrier and Smith were abandoning Presbyterianism for Independency a small party were in the act of seceding from the Relief Church at Glasgow under the pastoral care of the Rev. William Cruden, whom they did not consider qualified to preside over a Congregation/

(5) "The Case of Jas. Smith & R. Ferrier" (Ed. 1816) pp. 1-2
 (6) Ferrier's Preface to the "King of Martyrs" p. 15
 (7) Ibid pp. 18, 19.

gation. At the head of this party were Archibald Paterson, Matthew Alexander, and David Dale, the founder of the New Lanark Mills. Doubts had arisen in Dale's mind and in the minds of the others as to the Scriptural warrant for the Presbyterian form of Church government. John Barclay, Fettercairn, at a later date the founder of the Bereans but at this time still a Presbyterian minister, visited Dale and urged upon him and his friends to search the Scriptures thoroughly and satisfy themselves as to the (8) divine warrant for Presbyterianism. As a result of their search Dale and the others not only left the Relief Church, but proceeded to hold meetings of their own in a private house. Their members growing - by the end of 1768 they had twenty five members - a chapel was built for them through the liberality of Paterson, who was a wealthy candlemaker; from this connection the building was known as the "Candle Kirk". The "Case" of the two Fife Ministers came into their hands, and finding themselves in agreement with the views put forward by Smith and Ferrier, they sent a deputation to the Church at Balchristie. After some discussion the proposal was put forward that Ferrier should come to Glasgow, which he did in 1769. Dale and he were ordained as joint elders over the Glasgow Congregation, while James Simpson, a Largo Weaver, became Smith's colleague at Balchristie. The new denomination had many adversaries and the Glasgow Congregation had to endure much persecution. Their meeting house was violently assaulted with stones; but by patient enduring they overcame, and in well doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Many clave unto/

(8) Jas. Brown's "The Religious Denominations of Glasgow" I. pp. 33, 34.

unto them, not only in the City, but likewise from
 (9)
 Hamilton and Paisley.

In a very short time the spirit of division began to manifest itself in the Glasgow Congregation. Should the Lord's Prayer form part of the worship on Sunday? Should "Amen" be audibly pronounced by the worshippers at the close of public prayer? Should they stand while singing as well as while praying? These became vital issues on which there was a sharp cleavage of opinion. Dale urged mutual forbearance until they should see whether they could not ultimately come to an agreement. Ferrier, however, would not wait; there must be "unity of judgment". That unity not being possible, along with some who adhered to him, he left and joined the Glasite Church. (It was as a Glasite that Ferrier wrote in 1776 a preface to an addition of Glas's "Testimony of the King of Martyrs" - the work which, as we have seen, first of all set his mind in the direction of Independency)

From the first Church at Balchristie Churches sprang up in Kirkcaldy, Perth and Methven, while from the Glasgow Church, came Churches at Hamilton, New Lanark, and Paisley. In Montrose, Marykirk, Galashiels and Edinburgh Churches were also formed. At Airdrie circa 1807 a Church was started but its existence was short owing to a bitter division on the question of baptism. The Congregational Church at Earlsferry, which owed its inception to the Haldanes, in 1813 went over to the Old Scots Independents. In Dundee a Church was formed in 1769 by Andrew Scott the Minister of Bell Street Anti-burgher/

(9) Mr Gavin's "Hist. Sketches" p. vii.

Burgher congregation in that town. Scott had protested against his denomination's view of "swearing covenants" being made a term of communion. For this he was suspended by his presbytery in 1768, but he continued to preach in defiance of their sentence with the result that he was deposed for contumacy in November of that year. An action for the Church property was raised in the civil courts by some who sympathised with him, but the case was decided against them.⁽¹⁰⁾ Scott then found a meeting place in Barrack Street and formed a congregation there, over which he presided for fully twenty years, when he had to retire owing to certain charges having been brought against his moral character. There was also for a time a small congregation at Newburgh, Fife, under the care of Alexander Pirie who had a varied ecclesiastical career and caused much disturbance in three rival denominations - Anti-burgher, Burgher and Relief. When in 1778 for the fourth time the Relief Synod refused to receive him he returned to Newburgh, in the neighbourhood of which he had started his ministerial career as a minister of the Burgher Secession Church. There he set up a congregation on Independent principles and a few of his old people⁽¹¹⁾ joined him. Between the Churches at Dundee and Newburgh and a Berean Congregation at Sauchieburn a correspondence was kept up for many years, their ministers frequently exchanging with each other and bearing greetings and exhortations on behalf of their people to their fellow/

(10) Mackelvie's "Annals & Statistics of U.P. Church" pp. 160-1.

(11) Struther's "Hist. of Relief Ch. pp. 234-5: 245-6.

fellow Independents. The three congregations, it would seem, did not follow the practices of the Old Scots Independents in all respects. Plurality of elders never prevailed in the Newburgh Church or in the Berean Assembly at Sauchieburn, while in the Dundee Church during the first twenty years of its history Scott was without a colleague. It was not until 1789 that this congregation adopted the principle of plurality of elders and Alexander Kirkcaldy was associated with Scott as elder.

The Churches of the old Scots Independents were never very numerous or large and almost from the first they were weakened by internal dissensions and by members drifting away to other denominations, more especially to the Old Scots Baptists. As early as 1776 the subject of believer's baptism much disturbed the members of the Glasgow Congregation. They had been accustomed to regard infant baptism as defended by the authority of scripture, but other views were then adopted by many, including one of the elders of the Church, Mr Robert Moncrieff, brother of Sir Harry Moncrieff, and Mrs Dale. Nothing daunted, Dale stuck to his colours, but the Church was reduced to a mere skeleton, and years were to elapse before it recovered its former vigour and ^{members; (12)} members. This unfortunately was only one of many similar secessions. More particularly in the early years of the 19th century, when the question of baptism was very much to the front, were the Old Scot Independents Churches all over the country depleted by the departure of members who adopted Baptist views./

(12) Jas. Brown's "The Religious Denomination of Glasgow"
I. p. 24.

views. In 1814 a union was formed with some small churches in the North and West of England, which promised for a time to infuse new life into the denomination. The Churches, with which the Old Scots Independents at this time united, had been collected some years before by the celebrated Benjamin Ingham, a colleague of John Wesley and a son-in-law of the Countess of Huntingdon. Ingham had been with Wesley in America, and on his return to England had succeeded in founding certain religious Societies or congregations. Finally he settled in Lancashire. Wesley sought to persuade him to join the Methodists, but this, owing to disagreement with some of Wesley's views, he refused to do. In 1761 the Inghamites disagreed and divided on the question of Church polity, many of their members joining the Glasites. Those who remained adopted sentiments and practices very similar to those of the Old Scots Independents, and union in 1814 was, therefore, possible. There were then thirteen Inghamite Churches in existence with a total membership of 252, while the Old Scots Independents had sixteen churches - not thirteen as Ross states - with a total membership of 501. Much was expected of this union, but the anticipations were not realised, for seven years later four churches had ceased to exist - those at Balchristie, Methven, Dunfermline and London, and the total membership was less by twenty one.

The subsequent history of this denomination is one of gradual decline and decay, until today it is almost/

(13) Ross. p. 39

(14) Jas. McGavin's "Correspondence" p. 21

(15) Ibid p. 22

1/2 in Ross's
list p 39

almost extinct. In England one or two Churches continue, but in Scotland there is only one surviving and that in a moribund condition. This is the Glasgow Congregation who no longer have a building of their own but meet once a month in the Christian Institute. This Church, once the largest and strongest of the Old Scots Independents, struggles on but its disappearance is only a matter of time. Mr R. McNiven, who conducts the services, frankly admits that it "seems passing away".⁽¹⁶⁾

Having outlined the origin and history of this body of Independents we must now notice their doctrinal and ecclesiastical position. This was very fully set forth by Smith and Ferrier in their "Case" when the movement was started, and was restated in 1814 by James McGavin of Paisley in "A concise abstract of the faith, hope and practice of the Old Scots Independents".

Smith and Ferrier acknowledge that the Westminster Confession "contains many most precious and important truths" and that in their view "it is mostly founded upon the word of God",⁽¹⁷⁾ but it contains certain doctrines which they cannot accept. The chief of these are the following:- (1) The Eternal Sonship of Christ. They admit that the Saviour is spoken of in Scripture as the only begotten of the Father but they add, "He is never said to be eternally begotten". (2) The eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and His procession from the Son. On the latter part they take up the position of the Eastern Church and reject the Filioque clause. (3) Saving Faith: They hold that faith is not a complex but

(16) Records of S.C.H. Society III. p. 140

(17) "Case of Jas. Smith & R. Ferrier" p. 2.

a single act, and consists of the acceptance of a truth or fact upon sufficient testimony. Saving faith to them is the believing acceptance of God's testimony concerning His Son, which produces "a receiving, resting and relying on Him for salvation". Their view was thus Sandemanian rather than Confessional. (4) The authority of the Civil magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs. To this they objected and sided with Glas. (5) The civil magistrates power to call Synods. (6) The power of Church censures and discipline being placed in the hands of Church officers only, to the exclusion of the members. (7) In addition to all these they add that "there are several other expressions in that Confession with which we are not fully satisfied as authorised by that Word" but these they forbore mentioning.⁽¹⁸⁾ In Church polity and practice the Old Scots Independents from their beginnings under Smith and Ferrier departed from the Standards of the Established Church. Like Glas they looked upon civil establishments of religion as opposed to the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Christ. They also found in Scripture no support for the Presbyterian form of Church Government, but held to the Congregational way, that every single congregation, united in the faith, hope and obedience of the Gospel, is independent of any other congregation, and that having Christ as their head⁽¹⁹⁾ they are complete in themselves. The Old Scots Independents are not acknowledged by the Glasites as of their number, nor do they desire to be, but in polity and practice the two are very much alike. Their public services are conducted in nearly the same manner. Both have plurality of elders or pastors in every Church and both are inimical to everything like education for the ministry. Both too receive members by a public profession of their faith before/

(18) Ibid pp. 81 et. seq

(19) Ibid p. 2.

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(18) Ibid pp. 81 et. seq

(19) Ibid p. 2.

before the whole Church, and both give new members not only the right hand of fellowship but also the kiss of Charity. Yet again, both on the first day of the week gather to observe the dying command of Jesus, to keep up the remembrance of His death and sufferings; and both in matters of discipline follow the rule laid down in 18th Chapter of Matthew. It ought to be said, however, that the Old Scots Independents, for the most part, have shewn themselves men of a better spirit than the Glasites. They have been less disposed to denounce all other Christians, and for philanthropic and missionary causes, such as the Bible Society, have displayed - as the Glasites have never done - commendable zeal. (20)

One further question inevitably suggests itself as one recalls the rise and decline of these two bodies: How came it that they so soon died out as separate denominations? Their decline has been attributed to these reasons: (1) the coming into existence of Baptist and Congregational Churches, for these would draw their members from the very people who formerly were likely to join the Glasites and the Old Scots Independents (2) not only did such Churches deprive the older bodies of potential members but they provided a spiritual home for those of their fellowship who were dissatisfied with the condition of things in their own congregations. (3) the non-aggressive and unevangelical character of both denominations. This is perhaps the chief cause of their decline. (21) Had they had been as concerned to win the world as they were to nourish their own souls, the first two obstacles to their continued existence/

(20) London Christian Instruction (1819) pp. 484-485.

(21) Ross p. 39.

existence would not have mattered.

The Churches of Glas and Dale did originate in an eager desire to attain a purer and warmer life than seemed possible in the Church of Scotland of that day, and it is to their credit that they earnestly searched the New Testament for the primitive Church type, believing that this as nearest to the mind of Christ alone was legitimate. They, alas, came to exalt the letter above the spirit of Scripture. They were careful to obtain a plurality of elders in each Church, and to practice weekly communions, and they even descended to the bathos of the kiss of charity, because all these things seemed to have obtained in Apostolic Churches. The order and constitution of the Church came to be considered as of supreme importance, to be regarded as the end of Christian fellowship and not as the means of Christian edification and Christian effort. It is not by reproducing to the minutest detail every feature of the Church of the Apostles that Churches live but by their possession of the Spirit of Him who came to seek and to save. "Once let them care more for their own edification and preciseness than for the salvation of mankind and they lose the controlling touch of the mind of Christ, and tend to subdivide and die". Thus the non-aggressive and unevangelical character of the Glasites and the Old Scots Independents, their want of missionary enthusiasm is adequate explanation of their decline and extinction.

(22) Martin p. 74.

Overdone is his story - Roy is better on the whole though they add something to it

VI

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONALISM.

(i) Scotland at the close of the 18th Century:

The Age of the Moderates:

The Challenge of the French Revolution.

Having dealt with the early attempts to introduce Congregationalism into Scotland in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and having outlined the very minute Older Independency of John Glas and David Dale, we now proceed to consider the beginnings of the present Scottish Congregational Communion at the end of the Eighteenth and the opening of the Nineteenth century.

It may sound paradoxical, but it is true that Congregationalism, as a Church polity, had not in the first instance, much of a place in the formation of the great majority of the oldest Congregational Churches at present existing in Scotland. Not to any Sectarian motive, not to any ecclesiastical or theological controversy but to a deepening sense of God and His claims upon men in Christ Jesus does modern Scottish Congregationalism owe its existence. It is the outcome of a revival of religion associated notably with the names of Robert and James Haldane, who have not had justice done to them by ecclesiastical historians, but of whom it may be justly claimed that they did for Scotland what Wesley and Whitefield did for England. If we are to understand this revival movement in which modern Scottish Congregationalism originated we must look at religion and life in Scotland/

Scotland at that time when the Haldanes began their labours.

"There is one outstanding characteristic", says Professor Hume Brown, "which sharply distinguished the Eighteenth Century in Scotland from the century and a half that preceded it - the predominance of secular over religious and ecclesiastical interests"⁽¹⁾. Many influences were at work towards that end - some of them peculiar to Scotland herself, others part of a General European movement which she could not escape - and the full effect of these is very apparent in the years immediately preceding the period with which we are now concerned. There was the Industrial Revolution. It is difficult to assign a date to what was not an event but an atmospheric change; but perhaps the opening of the Carron Iron Works in 1760 marks the commencement. While men were discussing other things, the Industrial Revolution took shape, altering habits and thoughts as they had never been altered before. "The Lancashire inventions and still more Watt's Steam Engine made it possible to establish manufactures on a scale and fashion which had not previously been attempted The development was naturally greatest in the Scottish Midlands, where lay the mineral wealth of the country; but Dundee, Aberdeen, even far away Wick shares in the progress of the period"⁽²⁾. In the towns and villages a new population gathered, differing in many respects from the peasantry from which they had descended. Their fathers' theological interests they did not share; little they cared about the next world, they were too interested in/

(1) P. Hume Brown. "Surveys of Scottish History" p.106
 (2) A.J. Campbell "Two Centuries" p. 143.

in planting their feet in this. Both in politics and religion they propounded opinions to which older minds listened with uneasiness and even alarm.⁽³⁾

Equally important and significant was the spirit of enquiry and scepticism which was widely prevalent among the educated classes. Rationalism was the dominating movement of the Eighteenth century. It affected everything, literature, politics, philosophy, religion. The Latitudinarianism of England, the Aufklärung of Germany, the Newtonianism of France were sending waves to Scotland whose impact threatened to sweep away the old landmarks of the faith. "Deism", says Ramsay of Ochtertyre, "apparelled sometimes in one fashion and sometimes in another was making rapid progress in Scotland"⁽⁴⁾; and there is abundant testimony from other sources to the same effect. Christian theology and even the Christian religion in educated circles were openly denied. Human reason became for many the sole arbiter of all beliefs.

It was amid these tendencies and as an attempt to adjust the Church to these tendencies that there arose the religious party known as the Moderates, which began to rise in the first quarter of the century, asserted itself in the second quarter, and ruled the Church absolutely for the next fifty years. Moderatism is indeed a striking phenomenon in Scots ecclesiastical history "partly because it had for a time such mastery of a high spirited Church that it could carry out its policy, even on the most costly terms, and in the end without/

(3) cp. "Galt's Annals of the Parish" chap. xxix.

(4) Ramsay I p. 60.

without almost a protest, and partly because in its spirit of action, and its standpoint of intellect, it seems so alien to the ^{PERFERVIDUM} prefidium ingenium of the Scots nature".⁽⁵⁾ What then was the aim the Moderates had before them? It was to meet and win the educated opinion of their day which, as we have seen, had been carried away from dogmatic theology and Puritanism of life. "In the view of the Moderates the problem of the Church was to present Christianity under such an aspect as would conciliate the free thinkers and such as demanded a wider latitude of life than was permissible under the inherited creed".⁽⁶⁾ They were out to effect an understanding with the world as it seemed to be going; their creed, their standard of conduct, and their policy were all alike inspired by that intention and directed to that end.

As to the creed of the Moderates there is no doubt that the older Moderates, as they have been described, were deeply tinged with Deism and their attachment to the full content of the evangel was loose and cold. They removed John Calvin from the place of honour and substituted Frances Hutcheson. The old theological doctrine of man and his depravity they abandoned for the new deistic doctrine of man and his natural goodness; and as a consequence a system of naturalism in religion took the place of supernaturalism. The old watchword of Regeneration they discarded for the new watchword of Culture. Doctrinal preaching therefore fell into the background, the first-place being occupied with ethical teaching. Thus in 1734 the Synod of Perth and Stirling addressing the General Assembly/

(5) J. Watson "The Scot of the 18th Century". p. 152/ 3
 (6) P. Hume Brown "Surveys of Scottish History" p. 115

Assembly complained of the mere moral harangues which
 were substituted for the doctrines of the Gospel. ⁽⁷⁾ "The
 great realities which sent a shudder of awe through the
 soul of the Covenanter, the vivid apprehension of the
 unseen which fortified the Cameronian in his heroic
 battle for the truth - those by the Moderates were treat-
 ed as products of morbid spirituality, excrescences of
 fanaticism". ⁽⁸⁾ Against the later Moderates it is some-
 times urged that many of them were Socinians. ⁽⁹⁾ Such
 charges of heresy are easy to make but difficult to prove.
 Much nearer the truth is it to say that they took but
 small interest in theology, that their theological beliefs
 were reduced to the narrowest limits. Their temper was
 philosophical and ethical rather than theological; and so
 far as they shewed any doctrinal tendencies, they shewed
 them more by their impatience with their rivals than by
 any endeavour to establish a different dogmatic system.
 "They did not deny the old dogmas, probably they did not
 even doubt them: They simply felt it pleasantest to
 let sleeping dogmas lie". ⁽¹⁰⁾ The emphasis they made ^{was} on
 the ethical teaching of the Bible, not its mysteries.
 They preached not faith but good works, although it has
 been said that they left the practising of good works to
 others. One complains that to deliver a Gospel sermon
 or preach to the hearts and consciences of their hearers
 was as completely beyond the Moderates' abilities as to
 speak the language of angels. ⁽¹¹⁾ But how could it be
 otherwise? Passion, urgency, the sense of mystery were
 to them sheer foolishness, while the spiritual side of
 man's

(7) Cunningham ii p. 296.

(8) Hector Macpherson, "Scotland's Battles" p. 138

(9) Ramsay II p. 554: Memoirs of Haldanes p. 127

(10) Graham, Social Life in 18th Cent. p. 364

(11) Memoirs of Haldanes p. 129.

man's nature they ignored. Their ideal virtue was a sanctified commonsense, and they were the sedatives to all enthusiasm, all emotion. Even of Moderatism in its best guise this is true, for in the sermons of Hugh Blair, who had a first place in his own day and who may be regarded as the very model of Moderate preaching, what does one find? It has to be admitted that these discourses are written according to the standard of the day in a correct engaging style, but it has also to be admitted that they ignore the spiritual side of man's nature and the supernatural character of Christianity. They are cleansed from every trace of enthusiasm. They deal with those moral platitudes which were all the Gospel the intelligentsia of the Eighteenth century desired; they are common sense in very respectable English. The rank and file of the Moderates may have lacked Blair's literary grace but their preaching was just as mundane and unspiritual as his. "They taught from the pulpit solidly", we are assured by one who is no enemy but rather an apologist for Moderatism, "the duties of every day honesty, charity, good neighbourhood without stirring a pulse..... Some would address their people on poor laws and benefit Soci ties and as they laid down the heads of their sermons in the pulpit the congregation laid down their heads in the pews".

In their standard of conduct, as in their preaching, the Moderates aimed at adjustment and accommodation to the spirit of the age. Carlyle of Inveresk -
the/

(12) Graham, "Social Life In 18th Century". pp.362-363

the social, as Principal Robertson was the official, head of the Moderates - regretted that religion was too often presented in such an austere and ungainly form that a gentleman could not bring himself to like (13) it. That reproach and stumbling block Carlyle and his party set themselves to remove. For the stern, severe traditions of the Covenanters they substituted a truly agreeable religion which if a gentleman did not like it, he must be hard to please. Asceticism and spiritual excitement were in their eyes most dangerous enemies of a reasonable faith, and at whatever savoured thereof they looked askance. The present life was to the Moderates not merely a preparation for another, a condition to be endured rather than enjoyed; it was a good thing in itself and to be made the most of while we have it. The pleasures of life, therefore, they did not ban but insisted only on such a standard of Christian living as was compatible with them. And that standard they did not pitch very high; they did not demand very much of human nature, as Carlyle's "Autobiography" abundantly attests. In these pages we read much of "fine dinners", "fine scenery", and "fine women", but religion, except in the convivial form of Assembly politics, is never mentioned. "Carlyle indeed, writes so entirely as a man of the world, and is obviously so convinced that his office demands no other tone that the unimaginative writer may find it difficult to think (14) of him as the occupant of a pulpit".

Against/

(13) Matheson. "Church & Reform in Scotland" p. 14

(14) Matheson. "The Awakening of Scotland" p. 207

Against the Moderates it had been urged that in their desire to stand forth as men of the world they condoned moral laxity. By quondam supporters of Principal Robertson it was alleged that he gave his countenance and aid to an old fornicator" and defied all attempts to purge the Church of corrupt and scandalous members. (15) The charge was not without foundation, for several notorious cases of ministerial uncleanness and various forms of misconduct were brought before the Church Courts about this time and in many instances the offenders escaped. On Robertson's behalf it was maintained that he wanted to see justice dispensed with in the General Assembly with the same gravity and attention as in the Court of Session, and therefore he insisted that in all moral charges the guilt must not only be convincing but technically complete. (16) This principal^{le} may have been as salutary as it was novel, but Robertson's caution in enforcing discipline was in marked contrast to his zeal in promoting patronage; and on that account it was liable to be suspected. This at least would seem to be beyond dispute or question, that the Moderates' standard of Christian living was neither very exalted nor very strict; and not altogether without cause were they suspected of sitting as loosely to moral issues as to theological doctrines. More concerned were they to acquit themselves as popular men of the world than as loyal disciples of Jesus Christ, and for the attaining of that end they were not always too particular as to the means they employed. Therefore, under their regime, instead of the Church leavening the world, the world too often leavened and corrupted/

(15) Oswald. "Letters concerning the Present State of the Church". p.2: Matheson "The Awakening of Scotland". p.222

(16) Stewart, "Life and Writings of Robertson" p.257

corrupted the Church, and many of the Moderates were not inaptly described as "paganised Christian divines".⁽¹⁷⁾

Of that prince of Moderates, Alexander Carlyle, it was said that he scarcely acknowledged God out of the pulpit, preached borrowed sermons, spent the whole Sunday, except when at Church, in calling at country houses and "gallanting" the ladies, played cards for money, danced and drank to excess and delighted in profane songs such as "De'il Stick the Minister".⁽¹⁸⁾ This description would be entitled to little respect, if it were not for the witness of Carlyle against himself and his party in his "Autobiography". The picture which he presents in that volume of social and personal manners is "of the earth earthy", and leaves one amazed that any Minister of the Gospel was not ashamed to publish the grossness it reveals.⁽¹⁹⁾ Similar evidence of ministerial compromise with the world we have elsewhere. The biographer of the Haldanes mentions as a "proof of the degraded state of the dominant party in the Church, a Presbytery dinner to which James Haldane was invited in Edinburgh, upon a special occasion, and to which he had gone, hoping for useful, perhaps spiritual, or at least rational conversation on those topics in which he was now chiefly interested. Instead of this the company were treated to Bacchanalian songs, the folly of which was aggravated into something approaching to wickedness by an admixture of ridiculous, if not profane, allusions to their own sacred calling and functions. The burden of one song was the prescription of a bumper of Nottingham ale in the/

(17) Moncreiff, "Dr. Erskine" p. 55

(18) "The Players Scourge" p. 5: Matheson, "Awakening of Scot." pp. 209-10

(19) cp. Carlyle, "Autobiography" pp. 320, 324, 397, 498, 507 and 566.

the pulpit at different stages of a Presbyterian dis-
 (20)
 course".

The morals of the people under such spiritual leadership were sinking lower and lower, if records of that period are to be believed. We have, e.g., a pamphlet by Creech, the well known Edinburgh Bookseller in which he sketches the state of the City in 1783 compared with 1763. He says the quality of the sermons was wonderfully improved, referring evidently to their literary polish, Dr Hugh Blair being facile princeps. Along with this he tells how attendance at Church had greatly diminished. In 1763 Sunday had been observed by all ranks as a day of devotion. In 1783 the Church attendance had greatly fallen off; family worship that had been frequent was now almost totally disused. As to manners and conversation in company, he contrasts the modesty, decency and reserve of 1763 with the looseness, forwardness and freedom of 1783. The riotousness and licentiousness of the lower ranks especially on Sundays and holidays in 1783 compared unfavourably with their sobriety and decorum twenty years previously. In regard to morals the change for the worse was sufficiently painful. One proof given is this. Sins against the Seventh Commandment were punished by a fine which went to the poor, and during these twenty years such had been the increase of immorality that the annual amount of fines had risen from £154 to £600. This was the very time when Robertson had done his work and the system of Moderatism was in full force. The coincidence is remarkable. The Moderates had possession of the pulpits.

In/

(20) Memoirs of Haldanes p. 132 (136 2nd ed.)

(21) W. Creech. Edinburgh Fugitive Pieces.

In polished periods they were preaching moral duties, denouncing all religious revivals and stigmatising the Evangelicals as high flyers and fanatics. Their own system was triumphant, and the result was a declension in religion and morals, an increase of irreligion and immorality in the City and obvious to common observation.

As to the policy of the Moderates, which perhaps more than anything else in their record caused the name of Moderatism to stink in the nostrils of later generations, it was determined by their type of religion. That policy was to fill the Church with ministers who by their pulpit ministrations and social gifts would commend religion to the classes whose adhesion it was deemed the interest of the National Church to secure. As a means to that end the law of patronage was firmly upheld and rigidly enforced.

The old Moderates resented patronage as an intrusion of secular, if not of political, influence into the spiritual sphere and they shrank from the harshness and oppression which its exercise involved. Therefore it was pressed

(22)
"with comparatively a gentle hand till 1750 or 1751."

The later Moderates, however, led by Robertson, themselves a product of this system were humanists rather than divines, citizens rather than Churchmen; and they had no scruples in enforcing the Statute of 1712. Their temperament, and their intellectual aloofness, not to say pride, gave them a decided bias in the direction of Patronage as a method of filling their pulpits. Somewhat scornfully they would look down upon the people and their claim to have the last word in the election of their ministers. What could the vulgar know of the qualities necessary to

a/

a cultured ministry? Would they not prefer sound to sense and bring men of inferior ability into the Church? A patron himself, a man of position and education, would be more likely to select one whose training and culture would fit him for the high office to which he was called. Therefore, to the spirit of genuine religious interest that resisted the forced settlement, accompanied in some instances by the beat of drums and clang of arms, of fifty four undesirable ministers on an unwilling people since 1740, they responded in 1751 in the language of Carlyle of Inveresk by laying the foundation "for the restoration of the discipline of the Church".⁽²³⁾ This restoration of discipline was in aim and effect that no presbytery had any right to allow their conscientious convictions to override the legal rights of patrons to place over a congregation a minister however unsuited or unworthy. "Henceforth patronage was enforced with uniform and relentless vigour, and the statute, far from being liberally interpreted, was even strained in its support".⁽²⁴⁾

Long before the end of the century, the period with which we are concerned, the struggle about patronage might be regarded as over. Patrons now found themselves in full possession of their rights and generally exercised them with the full assurance that the Presbytery would induct their presentee. "The call still remained but it remained only as a memorial of ancient freedom like the senate and the consulship during the Empire of Rome. A presentee might be ordained though there was not a single name appended to his call".⁽²⁵⁾ In less than a generation, the later Moderates, unflinching advocates of law and order/

(23) Carlyle, "Autobiography" p. 256

(24) Matheson, "Church & Reform in Scotland" p. 24

(25) Cunningham ii p. 414

order in everything, had triumphed: The General Assembly had been brought to an admirable pitch of consistency and order, and presbyterial machinery at length moved smoothly and easily. But peace and order can be bought at too dear a price. Dissent was steadily on the increase. Every unpopular settlement strengthened the Secession. The people now seldom opposed a presentee whom they disliked; when such a man was forced upon them, they abandoned the parish Church for the meeting house. By 1773 almost one hundred and eighty congregations of the Secession or Relief bodies had been formed, the origin of which could in nearly every case be traced to the Act of 1712;⁽²⁶⁾ by the end of the century they had a membership of 150,000.⁽²⁷⁾

The avowed aim of the Moderates was to gain strong acceptable men for the ministry of the Church. On this ground they enforced patronage which they held to be the safeguard of the Church against bigotry in doctrine and coarseness in taste, but even in their own day the success of their policy was questioned. "Jupiter" Carlyle - strong Moderate though he was - confessed his disappointment that many preferred to obtain advancement by obsequiousness to powerful patrons rather than by their merits, that patronage as a means of raising the position and tone of the clergy had belied its promise. Writing in 1780, the year in which Robertson returned, he admits that "superior spirits", who would not stoop to political intrigue as a means of obtaining a benefice, had "generally betaken themselves to other professions".⁽²⁸⁾ Cockburn, referring to the opening year of the next century laments that the clergy of that time had failed to maintain the standard of learning which had characterised/

(26) Cunningham ii p. 414

(27) Struthers, "Hist. of Relief Ch." p. 408

(28) Graham, "Scottish Men of Letters" p. 99

characterised their immediate predecessors and "had fallen
 almost entirely out of good society"⁽²⁹⁾. The patrons, of
 whom much had been expected, when altogether free from
 the necessity of consulting the desires and spiritual
 needs of the people, were far from being universally anxious
 to discover men of character, learning and ability to place
 in the parishes in their gift. Their choice of a minister
 often fell upon the candidate most subservient or most
 useful to themselves. Not infrequently they exercised
 their privilege with a wantonness which excited the wrath
 even of Carlyle, who accuses them of presenting "the least
 capable and commonly the least worthy of all the probation-
 ers in their neighbourhood"⁽³⁰⁾. The nominee of the laird
 or (in crown livings) of the government was no better
 qualified in intellectual attainments than the people's
 favourite and often fell short of him in moral and religious
 earnestness. The Moderates' policy, maintained at the cost
 of two Secessions and an ever increasing body of dissent,
 had somehow miscarried.

Nor were the Moderates any more successful in
 their endeavours to conciliate and capture the educated
 classes. They had hoped by accommodating their creed
 and their standard of conduct to the ideas of the "nobility,
 gentry, heritors and freeholders" to attract these to the
 worship of the Church and the deliberations of its Courts,
 but they had signally failed. The aristocracy of rank
 and intellect¹ was as conspicuous as ever by its absence.
 Writing in the hey-day of Moderatism, Carlyle remarked
 that the last two General Assemblies had been attended by
 none of the superior judges and by "not so much as one
 landed/

(29) Cockburn Memorials p. 204

(30) Carlyle, "Autobiography" p. 555

landed gentleman worth £300 a year"⁽³¹⁾. Others lament that it has become as fashionable for gentry to stay away from worship as once it had been for them to attend it. One minister bitterly says: "In this part of the country it is only fashionable for the low classes of the people to attend the Church; the higher orders are above the vulgar prejudice of believing it is necessary to worship the God of their fathers"⁽³²⁾. Yet to win these Moderatism had shaped its creed, its standard of conduct and its policy. This to them had been the problem of the Church in their day.⁽³³⁾ If so, they had achieved no solution of it.

How fared the Moderates with the common people? For them they cared little and with them they had little influence. According to a French observer in 1790, the wild enthusiasm of the Seventeenth century was "now chiefly confined to the dregs of the people in manufacturing towns". The clergy did not share their bigotry. "Neither their learning nor example," he says, "has yet been able to banish entirely that enthusiastic spirit which has, for more than two centuries, been the characteristic of the vulgar. Satisfied with discovering truth themselves, they have used no strenuous efforts to reform the multitude which, they suppose, must always be governed by the grosser systems of mystery and error"⁽³⁴⁾. It is possible to over-estimate the extent of the rationalistic movement by the Eighteenth century. The movement never reached masses. The Moderates made the mistake of ignoring this and put themselves out of touch with the most genuine and fervid piety among the people with the result that the ranks of dissent/

(31) Graham, "Scottish Men of Letters" p. 99

(32) Stat. Acct. of Scotland X. 65: Sp. xi, 165: Creech, "Fugitive Pieces."

(33) P. Hume Brown, "Surveys of Scottish History" p.115

(34) Quoted by Meikle, "French Revolution" p.34.

dissent were largely recruited, and the Church robbed of needed elements of the highest power. That the Moderates should perpetuate the unschooled narrowness of the godly peasantry of Scotland was neither to be expected nor desired; but had they kept themselves in sympathy with their faith, their devotion, their fidelity to Gospel truth, how different might have been the history of the Scottish Church in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries.

Moreover, the stern enforcement of the Patronage Act and the political preoccupations of the pulpit - which were only to be expected when one third of the livings of the Church were in the possession of the Crown - tended to lower the Church in the eyes of the common people. Somerville frankly acknowledges that his efforts to "counteract anarchical principles" among his parishioners⁽³⁵⁾ "lessened his authority", and other divines confess that by their support of the government they "had risked the friendship of their flocks and their own usefulness as⁽³⁶⁾ pastors". Moderatism which had failed to capture the classes had little hold upon the masses. By the Moderates' measures and policy great masses of the population at the close of the Eighteenth century were alienated from the Church and outside all Church influence, especially in the rapidly growing towns.

The achievements of the Moderates in the world of letters must not be forgotten. They recognised no disunity between Christianity and literature, but did their best to reconcile them in a land where of late they had stood apart. To them belongs the credit of enabling/

(35) Somerville p. 267

(36) Kay's "Original Portraits" ii p. 120

enabling Scotland to participate in the intellectual revival, and in their day the clergy of the Church attained excellence in many branches of learning and literature. (37)

In the world of religion Moderatism unfortunately has no such triumphs to record. Indifference to religion, with laxity of talk, faith and morals was the prevailing mark of that time. Prof. Gregory in 1766 declared that "the Heathens" were all powerful, the Deists of his youth had become the Atheists of his riper years. "Absolute dogmatic atheism is the present tone". (38)

Repeatedly in the "Journal of a tour through the northern counties of Scotland and the Orkney Isles" (1797) do we come across references to the low state of religion both in town and country. Laxity of morals and indifference to religion "prevail everywhere; and many places are" in a most destitute situation with respect to the Gospel". (39)

This testimony received striking verification from the "Quarterly Review" ^{of what date?} which, dealing with the religious condition of Scotland at the end of the Eighteenth century, had the following "We should be sorry to malign either the living or the dead; but it is our deliberate opinion that with the exception of France, there was not a more infidel country on the face of the earth than Scotland, sixty or seventy years ago; and we further believe that she was mainly indebted for this bad distinction to the active exertion of her professors and the indifference, disguised under the title of moderation, which generally distinguished her more accomplished and influential clergy. (40)

The iron reign of Moderatism, as is now generally agreed, resulted in spiritual deadness. The indifference of the upper

classes/

(37) Carlyle's "Autobiography" p. 588: Watson's "Scot. of 18th Cent." p. 185

(38) M. Forbes "Beattie and His Friends".

(39) "Journal of A Tour" pp. 41, 43, 45, 46 et passim.

(40) Quoted by Hector Macpherson "Scotland's Battles"

Pp. 175-6.

classes was paralled by the ignorance and infidelity of the lower; free thinking and loose living ran riot throughout the land, and religion had almost perished in that "age of cold and feeble rationality when evangelism was derided as fanatical, and its very phraseology was deemed an ignoble and vulgar thing. It was "the midnight of the Church of Scotland". (Hume)

But the unchallenged supremacy of Moderatism was drawing to a close. As the result of a general movement of European thought it had come to birth, and [✓]though a similar movement it was to come to an end. As a manifestation of rationalistic philosophy Moderatism received a staggering blow from Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, which made its appearance in 1781. And another event was at hand which was to let loose forces that would transform ideals in all spheres of human activity. The French Revolution, which was to cause a volcanic disturbance in all kinds of movements, intellectual as well as political was to strike a mortal blow at Moderatism.

In Scotland, as elsewhere, the effect of the French Revolution was immediate. The first news of it was received with delight. Even some whose temperament did not incline them to look with favour on revolution hailed the downfall of feudal France as the breaking of a new dawn for humanity. (41) Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man" became a familiar book, especially among the new industrial class. It found its way into all parts of the country, and was even/

(41) Somerville p. 264: Graham, "Scottish Men of Letters" p. 93.

even translated into Gaelic. In many homes, into which only theological writings had hitherto entered, it won a welcome. Passions and hopes which had long been dormant were awakened into activity. To many was suggested the need of the immediate reform of parliament and of the burghs; in many others were aroused larger hopes too vague perhaps to be expressed plainly but bearing issue in excited gatherings, in banquets, even in local riots. The new society of the Friends of the People gained hundreds of recruits and organised branches throughout the length and breadth of Scotland.

The governing classes were alarmed, and when the extremists triumphed that alarm was shared by many who at first had welcomed the Revolution. The execution of the French King, the demolition of the old institutions of France, the Terror, the suppression of the Christian religion, the denial of fundamental Christian beliefs, the abolition of Sunday, the evident determination of the leaders to get rid of everything which savoured of the old order, and to make a fresh start with a completely new framework of social life - those things caused real fear, and the fear increased as the Revolution brought on a war in which Britain had to fight for its very existence. Disappointment and dread followed the first high hopes as liberty degenerated into licence, government into anarchy, and the punishment of crime into the murder of the suspected and the innocent. Many repented

of/

of their premature enthusiasm and widespread panic prevailed both in Church and state. (42) Everything was suspected which brought men together after any unfamiliar fashion or for any new object; and innocent adventures, such as the new Sunday Schools or Missionary Societies, could be regarded as cloaking secret plans of sedition. "To many it seemed as if the bonds of society were loosened and that only the severest repression could save the nation from the evil spirits which were streaming upward from the abyss." (43)

In such an age Moderatism was helpless. No message of hope had it for those who were alarmed. Against the Moderates it was remembered that there were some in their ranks who had imbibed the opinions of Voltaire and Rousseau, whose doctrines were bearing appalling fruit in France. The prolonged discussions on the Confession of Faith had created an impression which was not easily removed; in every liberal theologian men saw a potential Jacobin. When the heavens and the earth were shaken and men's hearts were failing them for fear, they needed and desired a refuge more positive than the vague tenets of Moderatism. Its theory of life was not equal to the test of stern reality. Talk about a benevolent Deity, a self-centred humanity obeying the dictates of reason, and a social order working harmoniously under the guidance of enlightened self interest seemed grotesque. The old orthodoxy with its stern theology and its dogma of human depravity seemed more in touch with reality than the sentimental vapourings of bloodless philosophers. (44)

The/

(42) Somerville p. 284

(43) A.J. Campbell p. 147

(44) Hector Macpherson "Scotland's Battles for Spir. Independence" pp. 172-3.

The Seceders were just as incapable as the Moderates of providing that refuge which the panic stricken sought. They were, of course, stiffly conservative in matters of religion, they retained the old orthodoxy, so beloved of a former generation, but they were more concerned with the minutiae of their peculiar doctrines than with the great movements of the human spirit that were agitating the world. The Seceders were zealous, but their narrowness militated against aggressive evangelistic enterprise. They were less interested in proclaiming the Gospel than in tilting against the Church of Scotland and against one another. They had many large congregations, but their outlook was sectarian; they cared more for their own denominational interests than for the spiritual needs of their generation.

The religious outlook in Scotland was dark indeed, but the dawn was at hand. There were raised up those who were not engrossed in questions of Church government and discipline to the exclusion of the spiritual needs of their age, who having found the blessings of the Gospel for themselves were moved to seek the spiritual good of all whom they could reach. Through them God wrought a great work in our land. In that much needed revival of religion at the close of the Eighteenth century our Scottish Congregational Churches were born. It is, therefore, for us now to trace as far as we may the process by which these two brothers were prepared for, and ultimately almost shut up to the work which was to prove the great business of their life.

(ii) THE HALDANES: THEIR EARLY LIFE AND CONVERSION.

Robert and James Haldane, born respectively in 1764 and 1768, were scions of an ancient Scottish family, the Haldanes of Gleneagles in Perthshire. In education, tastes and surroundings, they were in their early days about as far removed from what they afterwards became as it was possible for them to be. They were high born, possessed of ample means, and endowed with all that the world can bestow upon those who are considered to be the darlings of fortune. Who would have ventured to prophecy in their boyhood that when they were men of the world they would find their vocation and glory in open-air preaching and tract distribution and as founders of Congregational and Baptist Churches?

Their father, James Haldane, a captain under the East India Company, distinguished himself in that service. He inherited the estate of ~~Airthrey~~, near Stirling, from a kinsman, married a sister of Admiral Duncanson of "Camperdown" fame, and was on the eve of being elected an East Indian director when he died on 30th June 1768. Robert was then but four years old, James was not yet born. Their mother belonged to a family in which there had been much true religion and was herself a devout Christian. "She lived", her elder son said, "very near to God, and much grace was given to her".⁽¹⁾ Their first religious instruction was received from her lips and left an abiding memory, so that in later life her younger son declared; "My mother died when/

^{in living}
(1) ~~Memoirs~~ of Haldanes p. 13.

when I was very young, I believe under six, yet I am convinced that the early impression made on my mind by her care was never entirely effaced".⁽²⁾

On their mother's death Robert and James were placed under the guardianship, first of their maternal grandmother and afterwards, of their uncles; and by the latter were sent to the High School of Edinburgh in 1777. They boarded with Dr Adam, the famous rector of that School; and in the house opposite to them in Charles Street lived Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, to whose candle, early lit in the mornings, Dr Adam used to point in order to stir them to emulation.⁽³⁾ In his boyhood Robert Haldane was ambitious to become a Minister of the Church of Scotland, but it was then contrary to ordinary usage in Scotland that one of his position and fortune should adopt the Church as a profession; therefore when schooldays were over, he betook himself to other pursuits. For a short spell he was a student at the University, but the exploits of his uncle kindled a desire to follow him into the navy. The result was that in 1780 he abruptly left his studies and joined the Monarch at Portsmouth.⁽⁴⁾ James remained two sessions longer at the High School where he was reckoned a clever, shrewd lad, possessing a retentive memory and the capacity of application, but inclined to be keener on sport and adventure than on his books. In 1781 he too went to college and spent three sessions attending classes in Greek, Latin, mathematics, logic, metaphysics and natural philosophy.

At/

(2) Ibid pp. 13, 14.

(3) Ibid pp. 16, 19.

(4) Ibid pp. 21, 22.

At the age of 17 he entered the East India Company's
(5)
service.

In the Royal Navy Robert distinguished himself particularly in an expedition to relieve the beleaguered fortress of Gibraltar. A career of distinction seemed before him, but to the great regret of his uncle, Admiral Duncan, and also of Admiral Jervis with whom he had served, he withdrew from the naval service in 1783; and after a further period of study in Edinburgh University and some travel abroad he retired to Airthrey, where he lived for the next ten years the life
(6)
of a country gentleman.

James in the East India Service quickly made good, sailed on four long voyages, plunged into the gaieties of Anglo-Indian life in Calcutta, and even fought a duel, in which happily his pistol burst and his opponent's missed fire. No milksop was James Haldane: Had he not climbed the Cat's Neck in the Salisbury Crag as a schoolboy? And was it not he who quelled a mutiny in the "Dutton" at Portsmouth, boarding that vessel when it was in the hands of mutineers and saving the ship by threatening to pistol one of them who was on the point of blowing up the vessel by shovelling hot coals into the powder magazine? By 1794 James had passed his master's examination, and had been nominated Captain of the East India Ship "Melville Castle". Suddenly he too gave up his post,
(7)
sold out, and retired into private life.

Both brothers were passing through an intense spiritual experience about this period. "I lived on board/

(5) Ibid pp. 22, 23 ✓

(6) Ibid pp. 31, 38, 39, 40 ✓

(7) Ibid pp. 45, 46, 50, 51, 22, 56, 58, 67, 68, 63, 71.
6

board my ship" James tells us, "nearly four months at Portsmouth, and having much spare time and being always fond of reading, I was employed in this way, and began, more from a conviction of its propriety than any real concern about ~~eternity~~, to read the Bible and religious books, not only ^{on} the Sabbath, but a portion of Scripture every day. I also began to pray to God, although almost ⁽⁸⁾ entirely about the concerns of a present world". As he read and prayed and pondered there came to him the conviction that all was not right ^{with} him, and his mind became more and more concerned with religious inquiry. God - as James Haldane himself tells us - had begun a work of grace in his soul while he was on board the Melville Castle. ⁽⁹⁾ On his return to Scotland in 1794 - not 179~~5~~ ⁽¹⁰⁾ as Ross states - he had serious conversations with several friends, clerical and lay, and was greatly influenced thereby. That Jesus was indeed the son of the living God he became convinced, and of the way of salvation he was most eager to know further. "However erroneous my views were, my whole thoughts were engrossed about religion I meditated on these things and gave myself wholly to them. I hardly read any but religious books and it was my chief concern to know the will of God". Slowly but surely there came to him clearer views of the truth, - of the freeness of the grace of the Gospel and the necessity of being born again. "My desire", he writes, "was now set upon frames and feelings instead of building on the sure foundation. But I got no comfort in this way. Gradually becoming more dissatisfied with myself, being convinced especially of the sin of unbelief, I wearied myself with looking for/

(8) Ibid pp. 69, 70. ?

(9) Ibid p. 74. ?

(10) Ross p. 273.

for some wonderful change to take place - some inward feeling, by which I might know I was born again. The method of resting simply on the promises of God which are yea and amen in Jesus Christ was too plain and easy, and like Naaman the Syrian, instead of bathing in Jordan and being clean, I would have some great work in my mind to substitute in place of Jesus Christ". But it was not to be so. God, he began to realise, had mercifully kept him from those horrors of mind which in his ignorance and pride he desired as a proof of his conversion and was revealing to him instead "the evil of sin in the sufferings of his dear son, and in the manifestation of that love which, whilst it condemns the past ingratitude, seals the pardon of the believing sinner".¹¹ These earnest enquiries were not in vain - James Haldane came at last to the apprehension of Christ and the peace that passeth understanding.⁽¹¹⁾

That same process of spiritual renewal which during the winter of 1794 had been at work in the heart of James Haldane very soon afterwards began to operate on that of his brother. For some ten years Robert Haldane had lived the quiet life of a country gentleman taking little interest in politics, contenting himself with the improvement of his estate. But the tremendous happenings of the French Revolution - he himself has left it on record - shook him out of his lethargy and stirred him to the very depths. Like many others he hailed the downfall of feudal France as the dawning of a new and better day for humanity. "A scene of amelioration and improvement in the affairs of mankind seemed to open itself to my mind, which I trusted would speedily/

(11) ^{The LWL} Memoirs of Haldanes pp. ⁷⁹ ~~74~~-78.

speedily take place in the world; such as the universal abolition of slavery, of war, and of many other miseries that mankind were exposed to..... I rejoiced in the experiment that was making in France of the construction of a government at once from its foundation upon a regular plan, which Hume in his Essays speaks of as an event so much to be desired"⁽¹²⁾. He did not become a Friend of the People, for he felt that the numerous political societies that were then being formed were more likely to produce confusion than reformation, and would inflame the minds of the people rather than inform them; but his interest in the experiment the French were making continued unabated, and of it he had great expectations. He felt sure that its effects "would be so good as soon to convince other nations and make them willing to follow their example"⁽¹³⁾. These views he did not hesitate to make known. He delighted in discussing them with his friends and more especially with certain ministers of the neighbourhood with whom he was intimate. These, reasoning from a firm persuasion of the total corruption of human nature, disagreed with him and assured him that he was cherishing a vain dream. They did not at first convince him; he continued to maintain his own opinions, ascribing all or most of the enormities of the French, not to human depravity but to the depravation to which their minds had been reduced under the previous despotic regime. His ministerial friends, however, did not cease to meet and debate with him, sometimes until far into the night. Not of politics alone did they converse but also and chiefly of religion, "upon the concern of our immortal souls, and the things that/

(12) "Address to the Public" p. 4

(13) Ibid pp. 5,6.

that belonged to our everlasting peace". From politics Robert Haldane was thus led to consider religion and gradually he began to perceive "the glory of the doctrines held out in Scripture, and the consistency of the truth as it is in Jesus". He became anxious to be better informed and daily gave himself more and more to the investigation of it. He read much and deeply on the evidences of Christianity. The fruits of his reading were long afterwards given to the world in his work on that subject, but at this time his studies were greatly blessed to his own soul, for they were pursued with deep humility and much prayer that the Lord would enable him to distinguish between truth and falsehood.⁽¹⁴⁾ "When politics began to be talked about", he tells us, "I was led to consider everything anew. I eagerly clutched at them as a pleasing speculation. As a fleeting phantom, they eluded my grasp; but missing the shadow, I caught the substance; and while obliged to abandon their confessedly empty and unsatisfactory pursuits, I obtained in some measure the solid consolations of the Gospel; so that I may say, as Paul concerning the Gentiles of old, He was found of ME who sought him not".⁽¹⁵⁾

There was a considerable similarity between the history of Robert Haldane's conversion and that of his brother. In neither case was the change sudden; in both it was gradual and the result of calm and prolonged reflection. In neither case was it to be attributed to any external influence; yet both owed much to their mother's piety and teaching and were also greatly helped by friends from whose conversation they derived light amid the perplexities, which impeded their inquiries. James Haldane/

(14) Ibid pp. 4, 5, 10, 11, 12.

(15) Ibid pp. 13, 14.

Haldane sought and was much blessed by the friendship of Dr Bogue of Gosport and others. Robert Haldane was just as fortunate in his friends. He himself used to say that, although he did not attribute his conversion to any other human agency than the early instruction of his mother, yet he could point to one individual from whom he received more spiritual light at the beginning of his career - not a learned cleric, but a humble mason, of the name of Klam, of Menstrie, who was not only remarkably intelligent, but well read in his Bible and in the writings of the old Scottish divines. The views of Divine truth, and of faith in the finished work of Christ, which this humble Christian unfolded during a walk one day through the woods of Airthrey to a distant part of the estate, were so plain and scriptural that Robert Haldane for the first time saw the Gospel to be glad tidings, and ever afterwards looked back on that memorable walk with thankfulness.

(16)

Thus it came to pass within a short time of each other Robert and James Haldane had experienced a change in feeling, in thought, in motive, in the principles and ends of action. Each of them by the rich mercy of God had passed "from death unto life". Each was in Jesus Christ "a new creature". Old things had passed away. Their energies had become concentrated on a new and absorbing object and were to be developed in relation to nobler and more enduring ends.

(16) ^{The Lives} Memoirs of Haldanes pp. 70, 92, 95-6

(iii). THE IMPULSE TO SERVICE.

The genuineness of the conversion of Robert and James Haldane was soon manifested in their efforts for the salvation of others. Men of such decision and force of character could not be idle, but must wholeheartedly throw themselves and their resources into the propagation of their new faith. To Robert, it would seem, belongs the honour of attempting the initial effort of inaugurating, or seeking to inaugurate (for his self-sacrificing attempt was frustrated) their missionary endeavours.

An account of Carey's work at Serampore had been put into Robert Haldane's hands by his friend Dr Innes of Stirling and he was greatly affected by the grandeur of the enterprise and the purity of the motives which had induced Carey to make known the Gospel in foreign parts. Carey's plunge into the Indian abyss made a deep and indelible impression on his mind and impelled him to think how he could serve. "It struck me", he says in his own narrative, "That I was spending my time in the country to little profit, while, from the command of property, which through the goodness of God I possessed, I might be somewhere extensively useful."⁽¹⁾ After earnest and prolonged consideration he stood ready to act on his conviction that "Christianity is everything or nothing, and if it be true, it warrants and commands every sacrifice to promote its influence."⁽²⁾ "He resolved to sell his estate of Airthrey and with the proceeds to finance a mission - on the lines of Carey's at Serampore - to the Hindoos who were living under the British Government

To/

(1) "Address to the Public" p. 14: ^{Mc LwL} Memoirs of Haldanes

(2) Memoirs of the Haldanes p. 969
^{pp. 96-97-8}
^{The LwL}

To render the mission as efficient as possible Mr Haldane proposed to take with him others "in whose devotedness to the service of God he had confidence", and who by their knowledge might be useful in the undertaking. Dr Innes of Stirling, Mr Bogue of Gosport, Rev. Greville Ewing, then of Lady Glenorchy's Church, Edinburgh, agreed to go with him as did Mr John Ritchie, "a ^{highly} respectable ⁱⁿ pious ³ Edinburgh printer", who was to superintend a printing establishment which was to be an important part of the mission. In addition to these others were to have gone out as catechists, city missionaries or teachers. ⁽³⁾

The scheme was a magnificent one and did credit both to the heart and the head of its originator. But such opposition did it meet with that it was never put into operation, and the funds intended for it were directed into other channels. The directors of that powerful commercial body that had long ruled India, the East India Company, refused their consent. Robert Haldane, of course, might have gone to India, as Carey had done, without the approval of the East India Company, but he was of the opinion that a mission on the scale he proposed would be impracticable "without liberty from the Govern-
⁽⁴⁾ment of India". Strenuous endeavours he therefore made to obtain that permission but the political ⁽⁵⁾repute which he had achieved by the free expression of his early views of the French Revolution and more especially by a speech he had made at a meeting of the freeholders of Stirlingshire in 1794, summoned to consider the expediency of raising a volunteer corps, prejudiced his application.

We/

⁽¹⁰⁰⁻¹⁰¹⁾
(3) Ibid pp. 97-99

(4) "Address to the Public" p.14

(5) Ibid pp. 5-10.

We therefore find him writing to the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, as President of the Board of Control, soliciting an interview and offering to give him the fullest explanations of his political sentiments. "Whatever fear" he assures that statesman, "may be expressed with regard to the political sentiments of any of us, as making it dangerous to send such persons to India, will not apply here. As citizens of this country we conceive we have a right and we esteem it a duty to speak freely our sentiments about Government. As missionaries abroad we have no such business. Our mouths on that subject will be sealed for ever, when we devote ourselves to preach only the Gospel of Jesus Christ and what it contains in a foreign land"⁽⁶⁾. In another letter, dated London, September 30 1796, Mr Haldane further pleads; "many thousands have gone to India to attain a decent competency or a splendid affluence; we go with a direct view not to enrich ourselves, but to save the souls of men; and surely, Sir, it is no unreasonable request that at least we may be permitted to go out quietly and enjoy the protection of the government of India while we demean ourselves well. If we do not act there as we propose, the government can at any time send us home; we shall be sufficiently in their power. I am persuaded, however, that they would never hear of us but as ^{us}culcating quietness and peace."⁽⁷⁾

Dundas, however, declined to be assured by these explanations. He had already frustrated similar plans of his friend Wilberforce,⁽⁸⁾ and Robert Haldane's reputed politics provided a ready excuse in the present instance. "I could not persuade him", says Wilberforce, whose sympathies the Haldanes/

(6) Ibid pp. 18, 19.

(7) Ibid pp. 20, 21.

(8) R.J. & S. Wilberforce, Life of W. Wilberforce ii p.267

Haldanes had enlisted,, "though, as I told him, it is on your own grounds the best thing you can do. In Scotland such a man is sure to create a ferment... Send him therefore ~~into~~ the back settlements to let ^{of} his pistol ~~off~~ in vacuo. ⁽⁹⁾ Wilberforce's worldly wisdom was soon to be justified but Mr Secretary Dundas did not appreciate it.

Not through his distant relative Dundas alone did Robert Haldane seek to bring pressure to bear on the East India Directors and the Government. He solicited the influence and support of the leaders both of the religious community and the political world, and it would seem of the general public also. "We will bring it before the public", he writes of his Indian project under date September 28 1796, "and we have not a doubt but we shall interest in our favour all the numerous friends of religion and of human happiness of every denomination in every part of the country. The lively concern that they will feel for our success, the numerous petitions with thousands of signatures they will present will so fully express the sentiments and the wishes of the most virtuous and respectable part of the community, that we are confident Government would feel it a duty to ⁽¹⁰⁾ comply with their request". From letters by Dr Porteous and Dr Hill of St. Andrews it is plain that this threat Robert Haldane tried to carry out. A circular letter was "sent over all the three Kingdoms exciting the people to petition in the same manner as ⁽¹¹⁾ was done about the slave trade". This letter is headed "Edinburgh, February 16, 1797" and is signed by Robert Haldane, David Bogue, William Innes and Greville Ewing. They/

(9) Ibid Ch. xii: ^{Lives} ~~Memoirs~~ of the Haldanes pp 112.

(10) Edin. Univ. Laing MSS No.501 dated Sept. 28. 1796.

(11) Ibid Feb. 20. 1797: Mar. 21. 1797.

They express themselves as desirous of devoting themselves and their substance to the service of the Redeemer among the Heathen. After mature deliberation they have "fixed upon Bengal as the best field in the Pagan world for using the talents committed unto them by God". Their plan is "to proceed to India as soon as possible to make themselves acquainted with the language of the country, to preach the word to the natives, to translate the Scriptures and circulate them extensively, and to erect schools in the populous cities for the education of their youth; and they have sufficient funds among themselves for the execution of their designs. By the charter, however, given to the India Company they find it impossible to get out without their leave. Two Baptist ministers did go without leave, but their party, which would number "not less than thirty persons, including catechists", is too large for any such action on their part. The Directors of the Company have declined to give their consent, but they are not discouraged. "We are about to renew our applications; we have written to the evangelical ministers in England of all denominations, and the interest they take in the business is astonishing. Letters have been sent by them to the Directors from every part of the country". They now appeal to the clergy of Scotland. "We entreat of you without loss of time to write to, or meet with your brethren in your neighbourhood who feel any concern in the more general diffusion of that Revelation, which Godhas given to us his creatures; to lay this before them, and to join with them in writing a respectful letter to the Court of Directors of the India Company, stating/

stating the interest you feel in the application from us that now lies before them We are convinced such a letter will have a powerful effect". The appeal, however, did not succeed as had been anticipated; such a force of public opinion as would move the authorities to action in their favour Robert Haldane and his colleagues were not able to marshal. Even the missionary societies from which they were entitled to expect sympathy and support did not give them the assistance they desired; though importuned by them they would not move in their (12) favour. Reaction and panic were then in the ascendant. Robert Haldane's politics were suspect and had they countenanced his missionary scheme they might have been thought to countenance his supposedly revolutionary sentiments as well. They would run no such risk, and therefore declined to memorialise the East India Company on his behalf.

A second application was made, but fared no better than the first; the Directors adhered to their (13) decision. The political reputé of Robert Haldane, from which he was to suffer when later he began his missionary labours at home, and because of which he was constrained in self defence to publish in 1800 his "Address to the Public concerning political opinions and plans lately adopted to promote religion in Scotland", perhaps influenced the authorities to some extent against his request for leave to settle in India or at least enabled them with apparent justification to refuse their consent. But the real reason was not Robert Haldane's reputed political views. These were hardly needed to procure the rejection of his scheme by the East India Directors, one/

(12) Struthers "Hist. of Relief Church" p. 389

(13) Memoirs of the Haldanes pp. 114-115.

One of whom is said to have declared "he would rather
 see a band of devils in India than a band of missionaries"⁽¹⁴⁾.
 To every attempt to Christianise the Indian people they
 had been opposed. Their attitude to Robert Haldane and
 his co-workers was but part of their general policy prior
 to this date and for some years later.⁽¹⁵⁾ Any other decision
 than that they reached was hardly to be expected.

So terminated Robert Haldane's first missionary
 scheme. Such a conclusion would have deterred some men
 from further effort in the interests of the Kingdom but
 happily it was not so in his case. The energies of
 Robert Haldane did not find the outlet that he had proposed
 in the great land of India, but they were not on that
 account to be wasted. They were to be directed into other
 channels of Christian service nearer home to the blessing
 of countless multitudes of his fellow countrymen.

(14) Ibid p. 115

¹¹⁸
 (15) Ibid pp. 102, 103: 114-115.

[I think my story cannot be
 that of the world]
 It isn't - the water is sacred.
 moving the first [not always accurate] H.W.

IV. THE BEGINNINGS OF SERVICE AT HOME.

(1)

It was, as we have noticed, one of the results of the French Revolution, that by effecting a change in the temper of the times it ushered in an era of religious interest which displayed itself in missionary enterprise first abroad and then at home. The Baptist Missionary Society was founded in England in 1792 and the London Missionary Society in 1795. The enthusiasm evoked quickly spread to Scotland so that in 1796 missionary associations were established in Edinburgh, Glasgow and other towns. The same year the first number of "The Missionary Magazine" appeared and rapidly attained a monthly circulation of five to six thousand copies. From its pages one can gather something of the spirit that was abroad. It was a time of awakening. Men were astonished at their former apathy and alarmed at the condition of every religious denomination. Scarcely one number appeared without the suggestion of some "Plan for spreading the Gospel at home" or "Hints towards promoting the Gospel in Scotland".⁽²⁾ Meetings for united prayer were organised all over the country. Tracts containing exposition of Divine Truth were numerously circulated. Sunday Schools were extensively organised and taught. The aggressive spirit of Christian zeal was thoroughly aroused.

In the many and varied activities of the time many friends of the Haldanes - Dr. Erskine, Dr. Walter Buchanan, Mr Black of Lady Yester's Church and others - were taking a prominent part. It was inevitable, therefore/

(1) Vide supra pp

(2) Greville Ewing pp. 124, 125, 126.

fore, that their interest should be aroused, and just as inevitable, when one remembers their temperament and spiritual experience, that to such labours they should give their hearty support. But neither Robert nor James Haldane knew whither they were being led; neither realised that in this way they were ¹⁵ find their life work - the opportunity of advancing the Kingdom of God they so ardently desired.

To John Campbell, at this time an Ironmonger in the Grassmarket, Edinburgh, and the zealous, indefatigable promoter of all good works belongs the honour of inducing James Haldane to make a beginning in Christian service of a public nature. Campbell resolved to start a Sunday School in "a colliery village about five miles south of Edinburgh". Sunday schools, of course, there were before this time, but Campbell's was on a new plan; it was independent of clerical superintendence, and older folks, who were welcome as well as the children, were included in the address with which the school concluded. Such sympathy had James Haldane with the new effort that he rode out with Campbell to witness its commencement. He had not, however, the courage to address a few words to the assembly, although the day came when he could address three thousand people with ease. By the success of Campbell's school and others which sprung up about this time in and around Edinburgh James Haldane was led to think of the possibility of similar meetings in other parts of Scotland, and in the spring of 1797

John/

John Campbell and he began a week's tour with this end in view. "We set off on Monday morning", Campbell relates, "taking some thousands of tracts with us in a one horse chaise, distributing tracts to rich and poor as we proceeded. We obtained a meeting in Glasgow from a few friends of the cause of God. We laid before them the general neglect of giving religious instruction to the youth of our country except in pious families - described the plan pursued in Edinburgh for educating the youth in the principles of the Gospel by the formation of schools on the Sabbath evenings, and the countenance that was given to the plan, and the ease with which children were collected, with the trifling expense that attended its execution. After some conversation those present were formed into a Society for establishing and conducting Sabbath evening schools in Glasgow and the surrounding towns and villages. We acted in the same way and with the same success in Paisley and Greenock. "The result of that week's tour was the formation of sixty Sunday Schools, truly a magnificent beginning to James Haldane's long career of usefulness.⁽³⁾

Neither of the Haldanes as yet attempted to preach. It had been remarked by some of their friends that James "would by and by become a preacher". The suggestion pleased him and in his heart he cherished a desire for the work he deemed "the most important as well as the most honourable", but he was not confident that his wish would ever be realised.⁽⁴⁾ That successful journey to the west country no doubt strengthened and whetted/

(3) Philip's "J. Campbell", pp. 125, 126: 129-30.

(4) "Memoirs of the Haldanes" pp. 144-145.

whetted his desire for the work of preaching; and so when the opportunity "of being allowed to speak a word for Jesus" next presented itself, James Haldane did not hesitate to avail himself of it.

This is how it came about. John Campbell who was always on the outlook for new fields of usefulness was much concerned about the religious destitution of the people (chiefly miners and their families) in the village of Gilmerton near Edinburgh and secured a student from the south, Joseph Rate from Dr Bogue's academy at Gosport, to conduct services there for a few weeks. These met with considerable success folks coming from a wide area. After two meetings, however, Mr Rate was unexpectedly called south and the difficulty arose of securing a preacher for the following Sunday. Mr Campbell consulted Mr Haldane who suggested Mr John Aikman, then a student in divinity at the University and later the founder and first minister of Augustine Church, Edinburgh; but Mr Aikman would not consent. He, however, afterwards agreed to preach by Mr Haldane promising that if he did take the service the next Sunday, and Mr Rate did not return during the week, he would officiate the following Sunday. Mr Aikman preached as he had promised. Mr Rate still being in the south when the succeeding Sunday came, Mr Haldane was obliged to take his place. In this way it came to pass that he preached his first sermon on the 6th May 1797. One of his friends who happened to be in the/

the congregation pronounced him to be a Boanerges; the earnestness, the energy and the power of the preacher created a profound impression and in the estimation of competent judges, James Haldane had found his proper work.⁽⁵⁾

The soundness of this judgment was soon to be made manifest in a more conspicuous manner, for only a few weeks elapsed before he had launched out on his career as an evangelist among his fellow countrymen. For several Sundays Mr Haldane continued to share with Mr Aikman the services at Gilmerton. Their preaching being attended with much blessing they were encouraged to attempt bigger things, and having heard much of the low state of religion in the North of Scotland they resolved to make a tour through these parts. It was on Wednesday 12th July 1797 that Mr Haldane and Mr Aikman, accompanied by Mr Rate, for whom they had been deputising at Gilmerton when they had made their debut as preachers, left Edinburgh on their first preaching tour, after being commended to God in prayer in the house of their friend, the Rev. David Black of Lady Yester's Church. Prior to setting out they had addressed to the public through the medium of the Missionary Magazine a manifesto of their designs. They are undertaking this journey, they declare, "not to disseminate matters of doubtful disputation or to make converts to this or the other sect, but to endeavour to stir up their brethren to flee from the wrath to come, and not to rest in an empty profession of religion." They propose to preach the word/

(5) Philip's "J. Campbell" pp. 131-132: ^{LWU} Memoirs of the Haldanes pp. 145-147.

word of life, distribute pamphlets and endeavour "to excite their Christian brethren to employ the talents committed to their charge, especially by erecting schools for the instruction of youth". They are well aware that their object will be misrepresented but they avow their determination to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and they appeal for the prayers of their fellow Christians that their endeavours may be owned and blessed of God. They travelled at their own expense in a roomy chaise capable of accommodating the three preachers and a large portion of their tracts. Those they could not take were sent on before them to different towns. The distribution of Christian literature was an important feature of the tour, more than 20,000 pamphlets being given away. (6.) They preached in every town and large village to the extreme north of Scotland, and crossing over to the Orkney Islands they visited and proclaimed the Gospel over them all. (7) Indeed, wherever the itinerants came, they preached, taking their stand at the market cross or in the public street. Sometimes the town bellman or the town-drummer announced to the inhabitants where they were to hold forth and almost invariably they drew large audiences. We read of attendances of 2000, 3000 and 4000. Even at six or seven o'clock in the morning they could get a crowd of several hundreds. (8)

There is no doubt that the novelty of the undertaking helped to create interest and command attention. Missionary tours had been known in Scotland/

(6) For details Vide Appendix I.

(7) do.

(8) "Journal of A Tour" pp. 40, 41, 56, 57, 58.

Scotland prior to 1797; both Wesley and Whitefield had paid visits to Scotland, and indeed only the previous year James Haldane had accompanied the Rev. Charles Simeon of Cambridge on a preaching journey through the Highlands. But the preachers on these occasions had been Ministers, on this occasion they were laymen. Lay preaching was not unknown but it had hitherto been confined almost exclusively to the Wesleyan itinerants whose labours were usually inoffensive and always obscure. But this was of a different type, James Haldane was young and handsome, of commanding presence and powerful voice; and the fact that he had the bearing of a gentleman dressed according to the fashion of the time with his powdered hair tied behind, and had mounted from the quarter deck to the pulpit gave a certain piquancy to his preaching. Equally calculated to create interest was the fearless way in which the itinerants denounced the false doctrine they heard from certain ministers of the Established Church. "They attended the local Church", says a recent historian⁽⁹⁾, "only to find as a rule that the minister did not preach the Gospel. Later they convoked the people by a summons from the town crier, and preached to them in the open air... In their discourses they attacked those clergy, who failed to win their approval, in the virulent language, which Evangelicalism has always been prone to use". The statement does James Haldane and his colleagues less than justice. They did not attend public worship in the place in which they happened to be of a Sunday morning simply/

(9) A.J. Campbell "Two Centuries" p. 158

simply to find fault with the preacher. They went
 to join their fellow Christians in the worship of
 God. They actually had advanced as far as Kirriemuir,¹¹
 before they ventured to offer a word of criticism
 of the preaching to which they had listened. But then
 and on subsequent occasions, they did not hesitate
 in their concern for the souls of men, fearlessly and
 faithfully to warn their hearers against doctrine which
 to them was in flat contradiction of the plain teaching
 of Scripture. That they were somewhat unwise in
 making these attacks on individuals they seem to have
 realised, for in the intimation of the Missionary Tour
 of the following year they announce their intention of
 adopting "a different line of conduct from that which
 they formerly pursued, in animadverting upon the con-
 duct of particular ministers".⁽¹¹⁾ Certainly laymen
 venturing to cross swords with ministers on matters
 theological in these days must have aroused interest
 and provoked discussion. But the success of Mr
 Haldane and his colleagues in their first itinerancy
 is not to be explained on these grounds alone. The
 power and passion of the preachers, their tremendous
 earnestness and concern for the soul of men counted
 for far more. Above all, it has to be remembered that
 many amid the distress and upheaval of the time were
 eager to hear just such a message as they so eloquently
 proclaimed, and when it came it thrilled their hearts
 and was as welcome as cold water to a thirsty soul.
 It was truly a time of revival. "Multitudes dated
 their turning to God from the period of this awakening.
 Several years later, the Rev. Mr Cleghorn names, as
 within/

(10) "Journal of A Tour" pp. 38-40

(11) "The Missionary Magazine" (1798) p. 337

This very first
 Sunday
 of p. 225
 H.

within his knowledge, in the small town of Wick alone, forty cases in which there had been a solid work of conversion"⁽¹²⁾. But not merely from such instances must the good that was done be estimated. It was far more visible in the impulse given to the Establiashed Church and to the other denominations of Scotland. The words of James Haldane and his friends were life from the dead not only to many individuals but to all the Scottish Churches.

^{Lives}
 (12) ~~Memoirs~~ of the Haldanes p, 188
 195

(v) FIRST FRUITS: "The Journal of a Tour"; "The Society for Propagating Gospel at Home".

At the conclusion of the tour to the North in the beginning of November 1797 an account of the itinerants' experiences and their views as to the religious condition of the country through which they had travelled was published and widely circulated, and there is reason to believe that the written word was productive of far-reaching results even as the spoken had been. The "Journal", as it was called, was chiefly the work of James Haldane who in a lengthy introduction submitted what may be regarded as his confessio and apologia. This he deemed necessary because even among his friends there were some who criticised the methods which he and his colleagues had employed.

(1) His views of religion, which he sets forth in plain terms, are sufficiently orthodox and evangelical to acquit him of any charge of innovation or heresy on that score. It is against the practice of lay-preaching that he has to defend himself and his colleagues, and this he is at considerable pains to do.

"We would not", he says, "be understood to mean, that every follower of Jesus must leave the occupation by which he provides for his family, to become a public preachers. It is an indispensable Christian duty for every man to provide for his family. But we consider every Christian as bound, wherever he has opportunity, to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and to point out Jesus as the way, the truth, the/

(1) Journal of A Tour pp. 2-3.

the life. Whether a man declare those important truths to two or two hundred, he is in our opinion a preacher of the Gospel. If it be said, Preaching means teaching in public, we maintain that every Christian, according to his ability, has a right to do so although doubtless various reasons may restrain him from exercising that right".⁽²⁾ On this they take their stand, for they find nothing in Scripture against it. The question of whether a man has been licensed to preach is, in their judgment, beside the point, since nowhere in Scripture are unlicensed persons prohibited from preaching. The present low state of religion is to them a sufficient call "to go to the highways and hedges, and endeavour to compel their fellow sinners to lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel". The ministerial argument that laymen should be prevented from interfering with what is called clerical business is turned upon the ministers; is it not more necessary that, as an example, the clergy should refrain from secular employments? "It is very common for a minister in the country to engage in the business of a farmer. This is surely as a great violation of order as it could be for a farmer to preach, but with this difference, the farmer's preaching might be of use to others; the minister's preaching can only profit himself."⁽³⁾ But most important of all to them is the fact that their preaching has been welcomed and blessed; their congregations would not have been more numerous or attentive had they enjoyed all the influence of presbyterial licence could confer, and therefore they are sure they have done what their Lord would have/

(2) Ibid pp. 5, 6.
 (3) Ibid pp. 16-17.

(4)
have them do.

By such arguments did James Haldane seek to justify the preaching in which he and his colleagues had engaged, but they did not disarm opposition. The pious Lady Leven, honouring the preachers, but regretting their lack of prudence and meekness declared that they were "persecuting the Church, if not levelling at the constitution"; the venerable Dr Erskine was of the opinion that laymen should not take a text but just give an exhortation, - and while the Moderate Clergy were indignant, the Evangelicals were divided, some approving, others disapproving.⁽⁵⁾ Suspicion of the novelty of lay-preaching so far from being allayed, continued to grow, so that not only the Church of Scotland but even the Seceders, as we shall later notice, through their Supreme Courts expressed their strong disapproval.

A spirited defence of their disapproval of the doctrine preached by certain ministers is also submitted. This is, they believe, the principal objection made against them, but they hold that any other action than that they took would have been base and cowardly. "We can assure", they say, "those who blame our conduct respecting the ministers against whom we testified, that it was the most unpleasant service we performed on the journey; and nothing but the consideration of its being an important duty could have induced us to go through it. We could have no private end in view, and we would seriously request our Christian brethren who differ from us in opinion to reconsider the subject/

(4) Ibid p. 2.

(5) Philip, J. Campbell p. 139

subject. How would they have advised us to have acted? Should we have staid away from Church altogether thus exposing ourselves to the charge of disregarding public worship? or should we have heard sermons openly contradicting the Gospel, without taking notice of what we had heard? In this way should we not have bidden false teachers God speed, by pretending to join in the worship. Thus indeed we should have escaped opposition but we could not have maintained a good conscience"⁽⁶⁾. Here again the arguments of James Haldane do not seem to have been effective in disarming opposition. The "legal preachers", against whom the itinerants had directed their shafts, and the party they belonged to, were ~~not~~ likely to be conciliated by such pleading, while many of the evangelicals disapproved of such personal attacks on ministerial brethren as subversive of Church order.

~~Several~~ other charges - e.g. that they were disturbers of the peace of the country - are met and answered in the introduction. The very fact that such attacks were made is proof surely of the stir that the preaching of the word by James Haldane and his two friends had made throughout the length and breadth of the land, of a general impression that a new and important movement had been launched which could not be ignored.

The Journal itself, a detailed account day by day of the wanderings and labours of the missionaries, reveals the need for such a movement, for it presents a picture of a low state of religion in Scotland at this time. Entries like the following are numerous: "This place (Cullen) is notorious for its laxity of morals and indifference to religion;"/

(6) Journal of A Tour p. 27.

religion;" "The state of religion in this place (Ellon) is very low"; "heard with much regret that infidel principles had gained considerable ^{way?} gain in this place (Kirriemuir)"; "the two last mentioned places (Bervie and Stonehaven) appear to be in a most destitute situation with respect to the Gospel."⁽⁷⁾ Ignorance, indifference and infidelity everywhere prevalent; religion in Scotland, particularly in the north, at a very low ebb - such was the report that the itinerants brought back from their journeyings. But there was one encouraging feature; the people in almost every place seemed willing to receive their message and appeared thankful for instruction. The fact that great crowds had flocked to hear the Gospel and had been moved by what they had heard was proof thereof. The duty of Christian people was therefore plain. They were called, not only to pray, but to show the sincerity of their prayers by using means to send forth labourers into this needy but promising field of service.

Before the "Journal" was published in 1798 Messrs Haldane & Aikman communicated to several interested friends something of the religious situation in the North as they had seen it, and as a result on 28th December 1797 a meeting of some of their friends was held in Edinburgh to consult as to how they might most effectually help to bring about a better state of things.⁽⁸⁾ A plan having been submitted for spreading the Gospel in the more destitute parts of Scotland, those present agreed to form themselves into a society for that purpose, under a name exactly/

(7) Ibid pp. 48, 43, 40, 41.

(8) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act.) p. 9.

exactly expressing their object, resolving to call it The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. The first general meeting of this society was held on the 11th of January 1798, when a committee of directors was appointed, all of whom were laymen, and a statement of its origin and progress was ordered to be published.⁽⁹⁾

From this statement we learn that "the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home" was instituted from a conviction in the minds of the members that sufficient means of religious instruction were not enjoyed in many parts of the country; and its avowed object was therefore to disseminate religious knowledge in Scotland. It was non-sectarian and interdenominational. Christians of all Churches were invited to join "in seeking to promote pure and undefiled religion". "It is not our design", the promoters very definitely declared, "to form or to extend the influence of any sect. Our sole intention is to make known the everlasting Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ". In this purpose they proposed to employ approved men as itinerant preachers, to whom a certain district should be assigned and who should work under the direction of the Society, to encourage schools, especially Sunday schools, throughout the country, to promote the reading of the Scriptures, circulate pious tracts, and establish libraries of books on practical religion, and to defray the expenses of such ministers, or others approved, by the Society, as may be willing to preach in towns, villages in the neighbourhood, on Sundays or week-days. The Society employed two classes of agents - first, catechists, pious young/

{9) Soc. for Propagating Gospel at Home p. 6.

young men, whose duty it was to organise and superintend evening schools for children and who, even if they had the opportunity of addressing adults, were not to attempt to preach but to confine themselves to catechetical exercises; the second class of agents were ministers of religion of different denominations who itinerated under the auspices of the society. Highly popular ministers, such as Messrs Ewing, Slatterie, Burder and Parsons were so employed and drew immense crowds. It was one of the principles of the Society that its agents should neither make public collections, nor take money privately from those amongst whom they preached. Very definite instructions were also given to both itinerants and catechists that they were to avoid entirely speaking on politics, to show no partiality for any denomination of Christians, either established or dissenting, and to exhort the people to attend wherever the Gospel is preached in purity. (10)

Early in 1798 a Gaelic catechist, Hugh Ross, was sent out to labour in Perthshire. Very soon after Messrs Cleghorn & Ballantine went forth as itinerants for the society in Caithness. The success that attended the labours of these, their first agents, encouraged the Society to send out others as opportunity offered. By the end of 1799 many ministers of different denominations - Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Independents - had been employed in preaching tours, and forty catechists were travelling throughout the length and breadth of the land, while thirty or forty thousand tracts had been distributed. "The whole of the North of/

(10) Ibid pp. 81, 82, 89, 90.

of Scotland" the historian of the Relief Church tells us -^k was thrown into a blaze. The Established clergy complained that the world was going out of its place, and the old landmarks of things, both secular and sacred, were fast disappearing".⁽¹¹⁾

It was the privilege of both James Haldane and John Aikman to be possessed of private means which enabled them to preach the Gospel without fee or reward, and their movements were therefore independent of the new Society. Their labours, however, may be rightly regarded as supplementing its efforts. In the summer of 1798 they set forth on a second preaching tour, and on this occasion they journeyed through the south and west country. They set out on Tuesday 14th June 1798 and travelled by Peebles, Biggar, Hamilton, Greenock into Ayrshire and Galloway, preaching the Gospel in all these parts, and returned home by way of Berwick. As in the north, so in the south and west country, a profound impression was made. Crowds flocked to hear the Gospel, and many "who came to scoff remained to pray". Men and women were not proof against the power of such applied Christianity as they exhibited. Their manifest desire to serve the best interests of their fellows without fee or reward, and the singleness of purpose with which they laboured to bring other lives under the rule they themselves acknowledged, appealed with irresistible force to many around them. Once again through the labours of these preachers not a few were awakened out of their spiritual slumbers and fresh life was infused/

(11) Society For Propagating Gospel at Home pp. 15, 20; Struthers & History of Relief Ch. p. 402.

infused into the languishing souls of many professing Christians of all denominations. Scotland from the Solway to the Orkneys was experiencing a great awakening and a general spirit of enquiry was abroad. Great things had been achieved but greater things were yet to be achieved.

(vi) THE "CIRCUS" and the "TABERNACLES".

Robert Haldane had proposed to sell his estate of Airthrey and devote the proceeds to missionary work in India. Denied that opportunity of Christian service, he did not give up his plans of doing good. His efforts were henceforth directed to the home instead of the foreign field. He persisted in his endeavours to find a purchaser for Airthrey and in the summer of 1798 he succeeded. His capital now at his command, instead of being locked up in land, he supported generously the home missionary enterprise into which his brother had thrown himself. He was indeed the mainspring in setting up the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. Subscriptions were solicited and received from others, but these covered only a small part of the expenditure; by far the great part of the funds were supplied by Robert Haldane. But a further development of Missionary activity was about to be made which was to require an even more self-sacrificing liberality from that generous
(1)
giver.

The initial step in this new and ambitious venture was the opening of the "Circus", Edinburgh, as a place of worship. During the time the Relief Church was rebuilding, the congregation used this building, originally a variety theatre, for their Sunday services. Large congregations were attracted, many perhaps by curiosity; for a minister preaching from a stage was a novelty. When the Relief Congregation left the Circus on the re-opening of their Church, Mr Haldane and some, who shared his/

(1) ^{Livy} Memoris of Haldanes pp. 192, 207, 216.

his religious views and were associated with him in the work of the Society for propagating the Gospel at home, conceived the idea of utilising it as a Tabernacle, after the plan of those of Whitefield, where preaching would be kept up by a succession of ministers and where the accommodation would be free to all.⁽²⁾

Mr Haldane says that it was a minister from England - generally believed to be Rev. Charles Simeon of Cambridge, although he gives no name - who first suggested forming a tabernacle in the Circus.⁽³⁾ John Campbell claims that the idea originated with him, that he explained to Robert Haldane what Tabernacles were, and on the latter enquiring if a large place could be obtained in Edinburgh for a year before proceeding to build he mentioned the Circus, which the Relief Congregation were on the eve of leaving.⁽⁴⁾ It may be, of course, that the minister from England made the suggestion first of all to Campbell, who merely passed it on to Robert Haldane. This, however, is not the impression one gets from Campbell himself; he definitely claims that the idea was his. But it matters little whence the suggestion originated. To Robert Haldane belongs the credit for carrying it out.

The Circus was engaged for a few months as an experiment, and Rev. Rowland Hill, who was the first preacher, spent a month in Scotland, preaching on Sundays in Edinburgh and itinerating during the week from the Clyde to the Tay. The opening Services were held on Sunday, 29th July 1798 and were attended by considerable congregations, but on subsequent Sundays the attendance so increased that the place was crowded even at seven o'clock/

(2) "Address to the Public" pp. 69-70.

(3) Ibid p. 69

(4) Philip, "J. Campbell" p. 164

o'clock in the morning, and it was quite out of the question to hold the evening service within doors. On the Calton Hill, therefore, Rowland Hill took his stand and addressed a congregation of "fifteen thousand on the most moderate computation". During his stay many were converted, some of whom had been most grossly immoral characters. When he left the work was continued by a succession of ministers from England. Large and attentive congregations, particularly in the evening, were the rule, and Mr Haldane was encouraged to go on as well he might. (5)

The Circus it ought to be observed, was opened merely as a place for preaching and as an experiment, whether it would be prudent to erect a place for worship and of what size. Mr Haldane and those associated with him in his enterprise were at this time members of the Established Church and the forming of another religious party was not then in their thoughts. So little did they intend to interfere with the stated places of worship that the early service began at first in the morning at seven, and another in the evening at six o'clock. Their sole aim was the conversion of souls and the revival of religion. The Circus was to be undenominational but equally allied to all who held the doctrine of salvation by the Cross of Christ. (6)

A start having been made in Edinburgh, the thoughts of Robert Haldane turned to the possibility of similar efforts elsewhere. "It occurred to me," he writes, "that such houses nearly of the same kind, although a rotation of ministers could not so well be kept up in them, might be equally useful at Glasgow and Dundee." (7)

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(5) Ibid p. 155: *Memoirs of the Haldanes* pp. 217-220: Edinburgh Quarterly Magazine, I p. 313

(6) J. Philip: J. Campbell pp. 165-166. 279-80.
Memoirs of Haldanes p. 218.

(7) "Address to the Public" p. 81

Dundee. He was greatly impressed by what he had heard and seen of Whitefield's plans for the revival of religion in England. Might he not use his wealth to do something of the same kind for Scotland? With this end in view he purchased the Circus in Jamaica Street, Glasgow, at a cost of £3,000 and converted it into a Tabernacle. Similar places he proceeded to erect in Dundee, Perth, Elgin and Caithness. These Tabernacles Robert Haldane secured, or built mainly as centres for evangelistic enterprise. Indeed his brother was careful to state that "the opening of the Edinburgh Tabernacle was no separation from the Establishment. It was merely the opening of another place of worship for preaching the Gospel where all regard to forms of external arrangement of Church order was represented as bigotry". Such was Robert Haldane's original aim in his planting of Tabernacles throughout Scotland - not the provision of meeting places for Churches of any particular denomination, but the setting up of centres to which the masses might be drawn to listen to the message of the Gospel unto the saving of their souls.⁽⁸⁾

Now this at the outset the Tabernacle plan achieved. Great crowds, even of those who had been out of touch with the Churches and were apparently impervious to all religious influences, were drawn to hear the word preached "more plainly, and in a more striking manner than heretofore".⁽⁹⁾ Alehouses that formerly had been full on the Lord's Day were emptied and shut up by the frequenters of them going to the Circus.⁽¹⁰⁾

seat/
 (8) Ewing "Facts & Documents" p. 137
 (9) Edin. Quarterly Mag. I. p. 315
 (10) Address to the Public p. 75.

seat without difficulty or expense were soundly converted. Incalculable good was undoubtedly done.

It was about this time that the Haldanes were joined by the Rev. Greville Ewing, who was destined to play an important part in the later developments of the Tabernacle plan. Greville Ewing was one of the ministers of Lady Glenorchy's Church, Edinburgh when he was invited by Robert Haldane to accompany him on the proposed mission to Bengal. That invitation he accepted for he was heart and soul in every effort to extend the Kingdom of God at home or abroad. As editor of the Missionary Magazine and in other ways he revealed his sympathy with the work that the Haldanes were doing, and so inevitably widened the gulf between himself and many of his ministerial brethren. His resignation, therefore, not merely of his charge but of his status as a minister of the Church of Scotland on 1st December 1798 was not altogether surprising. He himself explained that he left the Church of Scotland because he had ceased to believe in the principle of an established Church and had come to question the
(11)
divine right of Presbytery. His study of the New Testament led him to accept the Congregational view of the Church, and so made his position as an Established Church Minister untenable; but there is no doubt that the opposition of the Church of Scotland at this time to Sunday Schools, home and foreign missionary endeavours, and lay-preaching, all of which he welcomed and supported, was also a contributory factor. On being loosed from his charge he engaged in a short itinerency for the Society

(11) Ewing, Facts and Documents, - pp. 20-21.

Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, and afterwards accepted Robert Haldane's invitation to take charge of the Tabernacle at Glasgow where the rest of his life was spent.

(vii) THE ADOPTION OF CONGREGATIONALISM.

The Circus was opened as an effort in undenominational evangelism the promoters of which still retained their membership of the Church of Scotland.⁽¹⁾ From this they had no thought of departing. R. Haldane says definitely that at first they had no intention of forming a Church.⁽²⁾ It was not, however, very long before they began to consider the desirability of constituting a Church, for early in December 1798, a few days after Greville Ewing withdrew from the Church of Scotland, fourteen of those who were Robert Haldane's lieutenants both at the Circus and in the work of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home met privately in his house in George Street for consultation as to the wisdom of such a step. After prayer and deliberation they resolved to form themselves into a Congregational Church, and to Mr Ewing, as most familiar with such matters, was entrusted the task of drawing up a plan for its government. After further conference they invited James Haldane to be their pastor. Hitherto he had contented himself with the office of an evangelist, for which he considered his gifts were more suited than for the work of the pastorate, but to the urgent request of his friends he at length yielded. The formal constitution of the Church did not take place till the month of January 1799, when two hundred and seventy two became members, and besides thirty eight others who were received as occasional communicants.⁽³⁾

On/

(1) Ewing, Facts and Documents p. 137

(2) Address to the Public, p. 71

(3) Kinniburgh's MSS - Albany St. Church, Edinburgh, p.1.

On Sunday, 3rd February 1799 James Haldane was ordained to the Ministry and inducted to the pastoral charge of the Circus Church. The service, which lasted five ~~hours~~, was conducted by Messrs Taylor of Osset, Yorkshire; Garie of Perth - and [✓]Geville Ewing. After a sermon had been preached by Mr Taylor, questions were put to Mr Haldane as to his spiritual experience, religious beliefs, and views of the pastoral office. To these questions Mr Haldane replied at length. His account of the dealings of God with him contained a ~~historical~~ sketch of his whole life. The declaration of his faith was scriptural and explicit. As to the work before him, he expressed his intention of endeavouring to procure a regular rotation of ministers to assist him in supplying the pulpit, which he professed his readiness to open for the occasional ministry of every faithful preacher of the Gospel of whatever denomination or country he might be. He expressed his approval of the plan of the church, as being simple and Scriptural, "but disavowed any confidence in it as a perfect model of the Church of Christ, to the exclusion of all others". Mr Aikman on behalf of the congregation explained how several of their members had long desired to enjoy the benefits of Christian fellowship on a Scriptural plan and at the same time to avoid the narrowness which would exclude from the pulpit ~~of~~ [✓]the communion table any faithful preacher or sincere lover of the Lord Jesus. Some time ago, after prayer and deliberation they had formed themselves into a Church and unanimously chosen Mr/

Mr James Haldane to be their pastor. The congregation having signified their adherence to the call and Mr Haldane having accepted it, he "was then solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry and to the pastoral office in that Church, by prayer and imposition of hands.⁽⁴⁾

The Circus Church - soon after this to enter on new premises in Leith Walk and to be known henceforth as the Tabernacle - was not the first of the Scottish Congregational Churches to come into existence at the close of the 18th Century,⁽⁵⁾ but it certainly was the first of the many churches that were to owe their inception to the preaching of James Haldane and the generosity of his brother, Robert. Others soon followed in rapid succession at Glasgow, Wick, Dundee and elsewhere - but the Edinburgh Church was referred to, and very rightly too, as the Mother Church, and according to the plan of the Edinburgh Tabernacle they were fashioned.

What then was the plan of the Edinburgh Church? To Greville Ewing, it will be remembered, was entrusted the task of preparing a plan for the new church when first Robert Haldane and his friends conferred together as to the future of the movement that had been started at the Circus. The fact that Mr Ewing's plan embodied the leading and distinctive principles of Congregationalism proves what his writings in the Missionary Magazine confirm, that he had not suddenly been converted to Congregationalism after his withdrawal from the Church of Scotland, but had reached the Congregational position after prolonged study of Scripture and the different forms of/

(4) Missionary Magazine 1799 pp. 76-80.

(5) Vide Appendix II. p. 1: also Appendix III.

of Church policy. Greville Ewing was a Congregationalist by conviction. The Haldanes were Congregationalists, to begin with at least, almost by accident, or perhaps more correctly by necessity.

Robert Haldane thus describes the plan proposed by Greville Ewing and accepted by the Circus Church; "The form of Church Government is what has been called Congregational. It is exercised on the presence of the Church itself, by its pastor and Church officers, and with the consent of its members, independent of any other jurisdiction; a form long known and acted upon in England. A strict discipline also is maintained. The characters of all persons admitted as Church members are particularly examined, and great numbers have been rejected, either from ignorance of the Gospel, or from not appearing to maintain a becoming walk and conversation..... The Church members are exhorted to watch over each other in love; if any one be overtaken in a fault he is reproved, but if convicted of departing from the faith of the Gospel, or deliberate immorality, or allowed and continued indulgence in sin, he is put away; and restored only upon credible proof of repentance. Such regulations we believe to be according to Scripture, and calculated to promote edification".⁽⁶⁾

It is plain from this resumé of the constitution of the Edinburgh Tabernacle that Robert Haldane had been carried considerably beyond his original idea of a series of Tabernacles as mere preaching places, that the real outcome of his endeavours was to be the setting up of Churches after a pattern which was strange and unfamiliar to Scotland. He was to be what he had never thought/

(6) Address to the public pp. 72-73.

thought of becoming, the creator of a new denomination that might do for Scotland what the Puritans or Independents had done for England, holding as they did the same principles and preaching the same truths.

But it may be asked, How came the Haldane Churches to be formed on the Independent plan? How came that form of Church policy known as Congregationalism to be adopted by the party brought together by the Haldanes in their attempts to evangelise Scotland? Three combined influences led to the adoption of ~~Independency~~ in Congregationalism.

The first was undoubtedly the influence of those ministers from England by whom they had been helped in their missionary endeavours. John Campbell attributes the formation of a Church at the Circus to the preaching of these. "Rowland", ^{Full} he says, "was succeeded by a number of Independent ministers from England. Some of them preached on the nature of a Church of Christ; the materials of which it was composed; its statute-book, or laws, by which it was formed, viz: the New Testament. Such discourses led us to entertain Independent views of a church, and church government, which led to the formation of a Christian Church in the Circus, and the election of Mr James Haldane to be the pastor thereof".⁽⁷⁾ Mr Campbell, we think, exaggerates, when he attributes, as he seems to do, the formation of a Church at the Circus on the Independent plan solely to the labours of these ministerial brethren from south of the Tweed. They had some share in that step being taken; it may be that through their teaching a Church was formed sooner/

sooner than it would otherwise have been, but they were not solely responsible. There were other influences at work to the same end.

The second of these was that there were among the followers of the Haldanes those who were even before this time inclined to Independency. The writings of John Glas were not then forgotten and neglected as they are today; his views of the Church of Christ were known and accepted by at least some who were connected with the Haldane movement at its inception.⁽⁸⁾ Moreover, there were two prominent co-workers of the Haldanes - Greville Ewing and William Innes, both of them former ministers of the Church of Scotland - whose influence would tell strongly in favour of the adoption of Congregationalism. Dr Innes of Stirling withdrew from the Established Church because he was dissatisfied both with its administration and its constitution, and had reached the conclusion that Presbyterianism was unsupported either by apostolic precept or example.⁽⁹⁾ Greville Ewing was of the same mind.⁽¹⁰⁾ With Presbyterianism, Established and Dissenting, both had finished; and such influence as they had - it was by no means inconsiderable - would be directed towards the adoption of Independency. Any other course with them was unthinkable.

The third influence leading to the adoption of Congregationalism was the circumstances in which the Haldanes, their fellow-labourers and their converts were placed. The Church of Scotland had not as yet, although she was soon to do so, publicly accused them of dark and sinister designs in their efforts to instruct the young/

(8) Ibid p. 281

(9) Innes: Reasons for Separating p. 51

(10) Ewing: Facts & Documents, p. 21

young and win those who were living in ignorance and sin, but there was not spiritual life enough in the national Church to appreciate their labours or wisdom enough to tolerate their zeal and turn it to account. Instead their requests were refused, their longings scorned, their evangelistic efforts repressed; that real Christian fellowship that they sought was wanting; they had to find their spiritual home elsewhere - in little communions of those who shared their religious experience and felt their earnest and active concern for the spiritual welfare of their fellows. So it happened many times that converts under the Haldanes and their fellow-labourers withdrew from the existing Churches and formed fellowships of their own, and thus not a few of the first of the Scottish Congregational Churches came into being. According to Mr Aikman, one of the original members, it was in this way that the Circus Church originated. "The chief principle", he wrote, "which influenced the minds of the brethren who, I believe, constituted the majority^{of}/the small company first associated for observing Divine ordinances in the Circus, was the indispensable necessity of the people of God being separated in religious fellowship from all such societies as permitted visible unbelievers to continue in their communion. This was a yoke under which we had long groaned; and we hailed, with gratitude to God, the arrival of that happy day when we first enjoyed the so much wished for privilege of separating from an impure communion and of uniting exclusively with those whom it was meet and fit that we should judge to be all the children/

(11)
children of God".

But why did these early Congregationalists not ally themselves with the Seceders and avail themselves of existing organisations? We believe for this very good reason. If they had formed a congregation of the Secession Church and called a minister from that Church, they would at once have found themselves implicated in a controversy of fifty years ago in which they had no part and of which they carried no tradition; they would have found themselves bound up with some "testimony" in which they had no interest and committed to the view that some other body of equally respectable and zealous Seceders were in deadly error. It was a much more simple course just to start a congregation of their own on simple evangelical lines and after a model which England had made familiar.

But why not Rally?

Modern Scottish Congregationalism, we therefore believe, came into existence through the force of Providentially ordered circumstances and the reverent study of the Word of God. Congregationalism came because the men who brought it were determined to have freedom in the use of lay and other Gospel agencies including Sunday Schools, and also that they might have better scope for their conception of a spiritual fellowship than the existing churches of that day allowed. Not one of these influences just considered by itself but the three of them together led ~~to~~ the Haldanes and their associates to adopt Independency or Congregationalism as the system on which their societies should be conducted and thus to form Congregational Churches throughout the length and breadth of Scotland.

(viii) OPPOSITION AND PERSECUTION.

The work to which the Haldanes had put their hands - the distribution of Christian literature, the opening of Sunday Schools, the preaching of the Gospel by earnest laymen in the high ways and byways, the setting up of Tabernacles to win the Churchless multitude, and finally the organising of their converts into Congregational Churches - provoked much discussion, as it was bound to do, and from various quarters called forth strong opposition. The Moderates had no sympathy with the efforts that were being made. Had not these itinerant preachers denounced many of **them to their flock** for not preaching the Gospel? Had not the Society under whose auspices they were sent forth declared that thousands who listened weekly to their sermons were "as ignorant of the way of salvation as the natives of ⁽¹⁾ Otaheite"? The evangelical clergy, too, both of the Established and the Dissenting Churches, were in many instances suspicious of this reforming zeal; and of the methods that were employed they strongly disapproved. Lay preaching and Sunday Schools, which they regarded merely as a modification of lay preaching, trenched on Presbyterian order and clerical prerogative, and ~~were~~ therefore, looked upon with an unfriendly eye. So far from being welcomed and supported, the Missionary labours of the Haldanes and their associates were resented by the clergy of their time.

That resentment was brought to a head in 1799 by the publication of Rowland Hill's Journal on his return to England/

(1) Soc. For Propagation of the Gospel, p.9;

England from his ministry at the Circus. This English divine, John Campbell informs us, "had some plan floating in his head, which he could never intelligibly define;- he called it a union of all Christians, throwing away all their prejudices and particular forms and uniting on the broad principle of Christian love.⁽²⁾ His Journal and Observations and Remarks, however, were not so well calculated as they "were designed to promote love and forbearance among Christians of all denominations". In the frank and caustic expression of his views of the various religious denominations of Scotland there set forth Christian love was not very conspicuous. Of none of them had he a good word to say; the ^eSceders were bigoted and intolerant, and the Established clergy were sceptical and lukewarm. His castigation of all parties could not, and did not, fail to produce reprisals.

It was, as we have seen, a time when everything was suspected which brought men together after any unfamiliar fashion or for any new object. To Rowland Hill's charge of heresy and intolerance the clergy, therefore, retaliated with an accusation of sedition and disloyalty. They professed to see in the Tabernacle plan and other schemes of the Haldanes dark and deep designs; their aims, they maintained, were really revolutionary and not religious, their good works being but a cloak for political propaganda. Dr Porteous in his correspondence with the Lord Advocate took up this attitude almost at the beginning of Robert Haldane's Missionary career. "Many of us have reason to believe," he wrote on 24th January 1797, "that the whole
of/

(2) Philip, J. Campbell p. 280

of this missionary business grows from a democratical root, and that the intention of those who planned it was to get hold of the publick mind, and hereafter these societies may employ its energy as circumstances may direct." ⁽³⁾ On February 21st, 1798 he professed to be further alarmed. The Sunday School movement gave cause for concern, for the schools promoted by John Campbell and James Haldane were on a new plan. In Glasgow old and young were invited to attend, and "did attend in multitudes", and "a loquacious manufacturer preached and prayed with vehemence till a late hour". No charge of meddling with politics could be made against them, but "obliquely or directly, they had attacked religious establishments. "Within a few miles of Glasgow we have at present no fewer than twenty of these schools". Lay preaching also was a cause of concern and anxiety. "The ministers of the Church of Scotland", Porteous naively admitted, "have enjoyed ease and quiet so long that few of them have directed their studies to subjects of this kind; and as they are not prepared for the attack, so I am afraid they are in danger of giving a handle against themselves by an illtempered zeal. If any method could be fallen upon to direct attention to the subject of Lay Preaching in a way that would not irritate, it would be a very seasonable service, but I am afraid the difficulties and perils of meeting a set of enthusiasts will prevent it." ⁽⁴⁾

This "seasonable service" the General Assembly of May 1799 proceeded to perform. Two restrictive measures were passed. One of these closed the living of the Church to all but its own licentiates; all licences granted to probationers "without the bounds of the Church" were invalid and/

(3) Edin. Univ. Laing MSS Nos. 501 (Jan 24th 1797)

(4) Edin. Univ. Laing MSS 501 (Feb. 21st 1798).

and presentations given to such persons were to be refused. (This part of the Act was prompted by the case of an English dissenter, James Garie, who had received a presentation to the Parish of Brechin, and who on his presentation being rejected, became the first minister of the Congregational Church at Perth). The concluding part of the Act went further; it prohibited ministers of the Church "from employing to preach, upon any occasion, or to dispense any of the ordinances of the Gospel "persons not qualified to accept such a presentation, and also "from holding ministerial communion in any other manner with such persons". By this act such men as Rowland Hill and Simeon of Cambridge were expressly aimed at and excluded from every pulpit in the Established Church. The other measure was based on a "Report concerning Vagrant Teachers and Sunday Schools". It recited various acts of the Scottish Parliament which had established a clerical censorship of education, enjoined the Presbyteries to examine all teachers, and invited the concurrence of the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General in vindicating and enforcing the jurisdiction of the Church. (5) But not by these measures alone was the wrath of the Assembly against the innovations of the Haldanes and their colleagues to be appeased. A "Pastoral Admonition", which the clergy were to read from their pulpits, was drawn up. It is a most amazing document, and reveals how strong was the feeling against the movement which the labours of the Haldanes had brought into being. Recalling the Scriptural prediction "that in the last days perilous times were to come, when many false teachers/

(5) Acts of Assembly, year 1799:pp. 370-75.

"teachers should arise, scoffers walking after their own
 lusts", the Admonition announced that the Assembly had
 "contemplated with devout reverence events in the conduct
 of the Divine Government which appear to us to be a fulfil-
 ment of this prophecy". At a time when "the unhappy
 nation of the French" was diffusing "like a pestilential
 vapour" its revolutionary and atheistic ideas, "a set of
 men" had appeared "whose proceedings threaten no small
 disorder" throughout the country. The individuals referred
 to are "those who, assuming the name of missionaries from
 what they call the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
 at Home", are perambulating Scotland as "universal itinerant
 teachers", setting up Sunday Schools in which ignorant or
 notoriously disaffected persons "presume not only to
 catechise but also to expound the Scriptures", and "bringing
 together assemblies of men in the fields or in places not
 intended for public worship, where pouring forth their loose
 harangues, they frequently take the liberty of censuring
 the doctrines or character of the minister of the parish,
 studying to alienate the affections of the people from
 their own pastors, and engaging them to join this new sect,
 as if they alone were possessed of some secret or novel
 method of bringing men to Heaven". These persons had the
 temerity to maintain that every man had a right to preach
 the Gospel, and there was much reason to fear that "the
 name of liberty is abused by them, as it has been by others,
 to cover a secret democracy and anarchy".⁽⁶⁾

The Assembly's indictment was now[✓] allowed to pass
 unchallenged. Answers were published by the Society for
 the/

(6) Pastoral Admonition passim.

the Propagation of the Gospel, Greville Ewing, R. Burdon (who was then officiating at the Circus), and "A Plain Man", a member of the Church of Scotland.⁽⁷⁾ Rowland Hill, who arrived in Edinburgh shortly after the Admonition was published, attacked the Assembly both in print and in his sermons. He lashed the Moderates for their bigotry, and the Evangelicals for "their criminal silence", which had delivered the Haldanes and their supporters into the hands of their "most malignant and avowed opposers". Upon the accusation of sinister political designs he poured ridicule. "Respecting the little army we are about to raise to overthrow the King and constitution, it should be considered that the children in these schools of sedition are, on the average, only from six to twelve years of age, consequently they will not be able to take the field at least these ten years; and half of these being girls, unless we raise an army of amazons, with a virago Joan at the head of them, we shall be sadly short of soldiers to accomplish the design".⁽⁸⁾ The Pastoral Admonition engrossed his mind almost to the exclusion of everything else, so that on this second visit to Scotland he busied himself not so much with preaching the Gospel as indulging in tirades against the Church of Scotland.⁽⁹⁾

But the Established Church was not alone in its antagonism to the new movement. Other religious bodies also gave public expression of their disapproval. The General Associate or Anti-Burgher Synod in 1796 passed a resolution against the constitution of Missionary Societies and testified against co-operating in religious matters with persons to whose religious opinions they were opposed as a Church/

(7) *Missionary Magazine* (1799) pp. 293-302.

(8) Rowland Hill, Letters occasioned by the late Pastoral Admonition pp. 42, 43, 24

(9) *Memoirs of Haldanes* p. 258

Church. In 1798 a further resolution was passed in the same illiberal spirit declaring unanimously that lay-preaching had no warrant from the word of God, and that, while they did not wholly condemn Sunday Schools, they judged that "no person under their inspection could, consistently with their principles, send their children to such schools, or otherwise give them any countenance if discourses were delivered in them tending to encroach on the work of the ministry", or if other persons were permitted to be present besides the children.⁽¹⁰⁾

The Cameronians at Glasgow in 1796 with equal bigotry excommunicated some of their members for having attended a sermon which a clergyman of the Church of Scotland had preached on behalf of the Glasgow Missionary Society.⁽¹¹⁾ But most surprising of all is the action of the Relief Church, whose founder, Gillespie, had received his training from the English dissenters. So completely did the members of the Relief Synod forget the rock from which they were hewn, that in 1798 they unanimously decreed; "No minister belonging to this body shall give, or allow his pulpit to be given, to any person who has not attended a regular course of philosophy and divinity in some of the Universities of the Nation; and who has not been regularly licenced to preach the Gospel".⁽¹²⁾

In explanation of this decree it has to be remembered that one of the Relief preachers, who had belonged to the Friends of the People, had been guilty of a political indiscretion which had been used against that Church; and it would seem that alarmed thereat, they sought to save their reputation by this measure so contrary to their liberal tradition.⁽¹³⁾

Meanwhile/

(10) McKerrow, History of the Secession Church p.p. 384, 393-4

(11) Struthers. Hist. of Relief Church p. 403

(12) Ibid p. 455

(13) Meikle, French Revolution pp. 210-211

Meanwhile, in other than ecclesiastical circles were political motives being attributed to the Haldanes and their associates. In 1797, Professor Robinson of Edinburgh University published his "Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments in Europe" in which he sought to prove that the unrest of the time was due to the evil designs of the Illuminati, the Freemasons, and other secret societies. In his review of the progress of their opinions in Britain, he identified the Haldanes with the Unitarians. "I grieve", he wrote, "that Dr Priestly has left any of his friends and abettors among us. A very eminent one said in company a few days ago that he would willingly wade to the knees in blood to **over**turn the establishment of the Kirk of Scotland. I understand that he proposes to go to India, and there to preach Christianity to the natives". The reference to a proposed mission to India pointed **unmistakeably** to Robert Haldane who at once took up (14) a vigorous correspondence with the Author. As a consequence, the statement in a subsequent edition was modified, but it was singled out for comment in a notice of a book on religious establishments which appeared in the Anti-Jacobin Review, May 1799. The editor subsequently published Robert Haldane's indignant contradiction, but retaliated by quoting from his brother's "Journal of a Tour through the North of Scotland" (15) the attacks which he had made on the Established Church.

By sending a copy of the Pastoral Admonition to the Sheriffs-depute of counties and the chief magistrates of all burghs, the General Assembly had shown a desire to (16) enlist the aid of the civil power. The Duke of Athol at the/

(14) Address to the Public pp. 24 et. seq.

(15) Anti-Jacobin Review III pp. 341-50

(16) Meikle, French Revolution pp. 211-212; Struthers; History of Relief Church p. 400.

the same time appealed to the Home Secretary for more severe measures. The new sect established under the auspices of Mr Haldane, he wrote, had come particularly under his knowledge by Mr Haldane's endeavour to make Dunkeld a "head post from which to disseminate through his Apostles, as he calls them, his notions and principles". These evangelists were engaged in even deeper plans than that of undermining the Established Church. They were organising all over the country meetings under the name of Sunday Schools, where the lowest of the people became teachers, and in the minds of the rising generation were implanting the most pernicious doctrine, both civil and religious. This he had learned both from personal acquaintance with this work and from information given him by those on whom he could rely. "I have no doubt", he concluded, "that energetic measures will be taken under the authority of Parliament, to annihilate the further progress of unlicensed missionaries and free schools, whether under the auspices of Mr Haldane, or any other enthusiastic and designing man whatever". In another letter to the Lord Advocate, the Duke expressed the conviction that "an Act of Parliament is the only remedy to check and restrain practices which will otherwise lay a sure foundation for overturning in the minds of the rising generation every constitutional and loyal principle. ⁽¹⁷⁾ That such a Bill was not only contemplated but actually being prepared by the Government we know from various sources. It was designed primarily to restrain the activities of the Methodists and other dissenters in England, but it would have/

[17) Edin. Univ. Laing MSS No. 500 May 20. 1799; May 24. 1799

have been equally disastrous to the Haldanes and their supporters in Scotland. Happily the appeals which Wilberforce addressed to Pitt were successful in averting the threatened blow.⁽¹⁸⁾ Robert Haldane, who was not easily susceptible to fear, was thoroughly alarmed, and published in May 1800 his "Address to the Public". This candid explanation proved exceedingly timely and useful, for it convinced the public that the authors of all this commotion were neither turbulent nor seditious, and that their aims were not political but evangelistic.⁽¹⁹⁾ Henceforth they were to be left to carry on their work free from official censure.

We must not, however, conclude that the Haldanes and their agents were to encounter no more opposition in their endeavours to spread the Gospel. The attempt to suppress them by new legislation had been abandoned, but efforts were still made by individuals and Church courts to put an end to their labours, and they were frequently subjected to persecution. Sunday School work found little favour, as we have seen, with many of the clergy of that day and those who engaged in it sometimes had to face opposition and endure hardship. In a Morayshire parish a Sabbath evening school was opened. The indignant clergy summoned, cajoled, and threatened the teachers, but no impression being made, the strong arm of the law was invoked against them. This, of course, was in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly of 1799. An interdict was laid upon them, but this too failed, for teachers from Elgin - a distance of fifteen miles - went and taught the school/

(18) ^{WV} Memoirs of Haldanes p. 278: Life of Wilberforce ii, p. 361.

(19) Cp. Address to the Public, p. 111, and Appendix p. 32

school until the original teachers were honourably

(20)
acquitted. By the Presbytery of Turiff another teacher was summoned to give an account of his conduct, but on the advice of his minister, Mr Cowie of Huntly, he put himself in a position to defy the Presbytery. Action was to be taken against him on the ground of violating the statutes obligatory upon those who became teachers of religion by which they were compelled to obtain a licence and to take certain oaths of allegiance to government. He escaped liability to that law by turning preacher as well as

(21)
teacher. Recourse to this device, however, was really unnecessary, for "three of the ablest advocates in Edinburgh", at the request of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home (not at the request of their opponents as
(22)
Ross states) after diligent search of the law of Scotland gave it as their opinion "that Sabbath Schools are of the nature of religious exercises and come under the Toleration Act which in Scotland is very ample and full The Act which the Church of Scotland builds upon was made upon the back of the rebellion of 1745, against Papists to keep them from teaching schools, and it refers only to schools for
(23)
reading, arithmetic, languages etc.

But the opponents of the new movement were not always careful to have the law on their side in their dealings with its preachers and teachers. Therefore numerous were the instances in which the missionaries were arrested, merely for preaching the Gospel. Some of them were sent to jail more than once, one of them four times; and in two instances they were put on board ship as impressed/

(20) Scottish Cong. Jubilee Services p. 73

(21) Kinniburgh MSS (General Act) p. 16

(22) Ross p. 68

(23) Kinniburgh MSS (General Act) pp. 16-17

ed sailors in the hope of ridding the country of them. (24)
 James Haldane was threatened with imprisonment for preaching at the Cross of Ayr, and from the village of Whitehouse in Kintyre he and John Campbell were sent to the Sheriff of Argyle, thirty five miles distant, under an escort of volunteers, as vagrant preachers, but the Sheriff finding no legal fault in them set them at liberty. They returned to the village from whence they had been taken, and to the mortification of the minister, who had been instrumental in having them arrested, preached from Philippians i. 12, "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather ~~unto~~ the furtherance ~~to~~ the Gospel." (25)

In some parts of the country those, too, who sympathised with the preachers were often times made to suffer. False reports were raised and circulated for bringing them into disrepute. Violent measures were designed and employed to deprive them of their houses and farms, (26) and not in a few instances were their lives in jeopardy.

By a strong determined opposition, which was not too scrupulous as to its methods of attack, was the Haldane movement confronted in these early days, and had its leadership been in less strong hands before that opposition it might have quailed. "Men educated in the retirement of Colleges", said Dr Lindsay Alexander, "- men of timid sensitive or delicate tastes and temperaments - men infirm of purpose or hesitating in action, would have been bent and scattered before the storm which interest and prejudice, and the old hatred of the human heart to all that is earnest in religious life, everywhere stirred up against the itinerant preachers. It needed a man who had been trained amid/

(24) Scot. Cong. Jubilee Services p. 79: Miss. Mag. (1799) p. 527

(25) ~~Memoirs~~ of Haldanes pp. 199-200; 285-287.

(26) Scot. Cong. Jubilee Services p. 76: Miss Mag. (1803) p. 364

amid scenes of danger and strife, and whose spirit was accustomed to rise with opposition, to encounter and brave the tempest. Such a man was found in James Haldane He was not a man to quail before priestly intolerance or magisterial frowns. Dignified in manner, commanding in speech, fearless in courage, unhesitating in action, he everywhere met the rising storm with the boldness of a British sailor and the courtesy of a British gentleman, as well as with the uprightness and unoffensiveness of a true Christian. To the brethren who were associated with him, he was a pillar of strength in the hour of trial, while upon those who sought to put down their efforts by force or ridicule, it is hard to say whether the manly dignity of his bearing or the blameless purity of his conduct produced the more powerful effect in paralysing their opposition when he did not succeed in winning their applause".

(27) ^{Lives} ~~Memoirs~~ of Haldanes pp. 290-91.

(1x) PROGRESS.

The opposition of the clergy of the Established and the other Churches to the Haldanes and their Agents on the score of invading clerical prerogative by their preaching and starting of Sunday Schools and the suspicion of these innovations as camouflaged political propaganda by the landed classes made the lot of the missionaries hard and difficult and often entailed suffering and loss, but the work itself went on and prospered abundantly. The clergy and the gentry were indifferent or antagonistic but the common people heard them gladly. At the very time when the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was making such determined efforts to overthrow their schemes, James Haldane, John Aikman, and William Innes were engaged in a preaching tour in the North which took them as far as Shetland, and everywhere, despite the Assembly's fulmination crowds flocked to hear them and conversions followed the preaching of the Word as before. Their Journal records that they found the desire of hearing increased rather than diminished and those who "have been already gathered in seem only to be a kind of first fruits of a more abundant⁽¹⁾ harvest of souls". So it proved. North and South, East and West it was for the new movement a time of amazing progress and advance.

The services at the Circus, Edinburgh continued to draw large congregations so that it was at length resolved to erect a large place of worship. This building, the Tabernacle, was opened in May 1801. It was capable of holding/

(1) Memoirs of Haldanes pp. 270-271.

holding at least 2,500 people - John Campbell says it had (2) the accommodation for 3,200 but this seems an over estimate - and on Sunday evenings it was full to overflowing.

Greville Ewing took charge of the services in the Glasgow Circus and there, too, interest was aroused, large congregations were attracted and a Congregational Church was formed on August 15th 1804. "An amazing congregation is gathered", Fuller, then on a visit to Scotland, wrote in his journal, "and was gathered from the very first Sabbath, and that chiefly from they not not where - from the highways and hedges." (3) On Sabbath October 19th 1800 the Tabernacle at Dundee was opened with Dr Innes, late of Stirling, as pastor: here too, (4) "the house which is a very large one was quite crowded". Not in these busy centres alone, but even in far away Thurso and Wick were meeting houses opened, (5) large congregations drawn and Congregational Churches formed.

Besides these Churches, which may be regarded as the direct outcome of the liberality of R. Haldane and the preaching of his brothers or his colleagues, others of our Scottish Congregational Churches originated about this time. Belmont Street Church, Aberdeen, originally George Street Church was formally constituted on 2nd September 1798 and originated in the conviction of its founders that the Congregational way approximated most closely to the pattern of the primitive Churches, and their consequent endeavours to start such a Church in Aberdeen. (6) About the same time, or perhaps even earlier, (although on this we cannot be sure for we have only tradition to support the earlier origin,) a Congregational Church was formed in Paisley by some who desired reform in the Church as well as in the State, but having no hope of reforming the

Established/

(2) Philip. J. Campbell p. 282

(3) Quoted in Greville Ewing p. 228

(4) Miss. Mag. (1800) p. 492: (5) Philip: J. Campbell p. 301; Miss. Mag. (1799) p. 229.

(6) Bulloch. "First Cong. Ch. in Aberdeen" pp. 13-14.

Established the Established Church sought relief in dissent by forming themselves into an Independent Church.⁽⁷⁾ In Perth as early as 1794 there were those who desired to form a Congregational Church in that city, and the historian of the Perth Church 'suppose' that this was achieved in 1798. Certainly by the end of the century James Garie⁽⁸⁾ was minister to an Independent congregation there. A Congregational Church was formed at Huntly in 1800 by the members of the Anti-burgher Church adhering to their minister, Rev. George Cowie, who had been deposed by the Anti-burgher Synod for countenancing the itinerant preachers.⁽⁹⁾ (The origins of these Churches are more fully set forth in Appendix II; and the question of priority is discussed in Appendix III.) None of these Churches directly owed their existence to the labours of the Haldanes, but all of them were helped greatly by the encouragement and support of these two brothers. The success that attended them in their early years was in part due to the stir that the Haldanes had created and very soon they were swept into the Haldane movement.

At the close of the 18th century fourteen Congregational Churches had been formed throughout Scotland; seven years later that number had increased to eighty five⁽¹⁰⁾ Churches. In a few short years the Haldanes and their missionaries had found their way into the most unlikely places and created an impression that could not be effaced. Very many of those early Congregational Churches of 1798-1807 were formed as a consequence of their missionary zeal and were brought into being to nourish the spiritual life of their converts. When one remembers that this movement was then looked down upon and attracted none to its service save the earnest, the humble, the spiritually minded, that/

(7) Kinniburgh MSS (Renfrewshire And Ayr) pp. 1 et. seq.

(8) W. Siewwright, Histor. Sketch of the Cong.Ch. Perth p.23

(9) "The Missionar Kirk of Huntly" p. 84

(10) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act.) p.48

Established the Established Church sought relief in dissent⁽⁷⁾ by forming themselves into an Independent Church. In Perth as early as 1794 there were those who desired to form a Congregational Church in that city, and the historian of the Perth Church 'suppose' that this was achieved in 1798. Certainly by the end of the century James Garie⁽⁸⁾ was minister to an Independent congregation there. A Congregational Church was formed at Huntly in 1800 by the members of the Anti-burgher Church adhering to their minister, Rev. George Cowie, who had been deposed by the Anti-burgher Synod for countenancing the itinerant preachers.⁽⁹⁾ (The origins of these Churches are more fully set forth in Appendix II; and the question of priority is discussed in Appendix III.) None of these Churches directly owed their existence to the labours of the Haldanes, but all of them were helped greatly by the encouragement and support of these two brothers. The success that attended them in their early years was in part due to the stir that the Haldanes had created and very soon they were swept into the Haldane movement.

At the close of the 18th century fourteen Congregational Churches had been formed throughout Scotland; seven years later that number had increased to eighty five⁽¹⁰⁾ Churches. In a few short years the Haldanes and their missionaries had found their way into the most unlikely places and created an impression that could not be effaced. Very many of those early Congregational Churches of 1798-1807 were formed as a consequence of their missionary zeal and were brought into being to nourish the spiritual life of their converts. When one remembers that this movement was then looked down upon and attracted none to its service save the earnest, the humble, the spiritually minded,

that/

(7) Kinniburgh MSS (Renfrewshire And Ayr) pp. 1 et. seq.

(8) W. Sievwright, Histor. Sketch of the Cong.Ch. Perth p.23

(9) "The Missionar Kirk of Huntly" p. 84

(10) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act.) p.48

that its whole Congregational tendency was considered subversive of good doctrine and religious well-being, so that men like Greville Ewing and Ralph Wardlaw were pitied and commiserated on throwing in their lot with it, the progress of these early days is positively amazing.

How is that progress to be explained? How was it that the itinerancies of Messrs Haldane, Aikman and their companions in the last years of the Eighteenth century set the whole country in a blaze? How came it that from their preaching there sprang into existence almost instantaneously a new religious body that hitherto had been nearly unknown in Scotland? The spiritual fervour and aggressive energy of the missionaries and their converts and the munificent liberality of Robert Haldane had something to do with it, but the true cause lies deeper and is to be found in the state of the public mind at that time when, as we have observed, the French Revolution had roused men out of their torpor and made them conscious of the necessities which craved immediate relief. To meet the new situation which had arisen the then existing Churches in Scotland were unable or unwilling; neither the Established Church nor the Seceders could supply the spiritual nutriment which in that time of turmoil and upheaval the people craved. But they would not be denied and so rushed forth impetuously to find elsewhere what was refused them at home. Hence the crowds that followed Jas. Haldane and John Aikman on their first missionary tours through Scotland. Hence the thousands that gathered on the Calton Hill to listen to Rowland Hill and other preachers from England. And hence the almost instantaneous rise into very/

very considerable strength of a new denomination, that till this time had been almost unknown in Scotland. "The new wine could not be stored in the old bottles, and so when it burst forth it was caught and kept by those who alone⁽¹¹⁾ at the time were prepared to receive it".

(11) W.L. Alexander, Ralph Wardlaw, p. 44.

(x) THE TRAINING OF PREACHERS.

At a very early stage in the development of his Tabernacle plan Robert Haldane found himself confronted with the problem of securing a regular supply of ministers to carry on the work he had inaugurated. These new places for the preaching of the Gospel were rising up in every direction, but where was he to find preachers for them? For Edinburgh he had his brother, for Glasgow Greville Ewing and for Dundee William Innes, but what was to be done for the others? The same difficulty was being experienced in the home missionary operations of the Society for the Propagating of the Gospel at Home. In many localities there were promising fields of service, but suitable evangelists could not easily be found. It was under these circumstances that in 1798 Robert Haldane conceived the idea of educating "a number of pious young men for the ministry who might be taken, as in primitive times, from the various occupations of life, on account of their piety and promising talents"⁽¹⁾. With the exception of his brother, John Campbell was the first person to whom he disclosed his intention. "I intend", he wrote to Campbell under date of 6th October 1798, "to give one year's education to ten or twelve persons, of any age that may be fit for it, under Mr Bogue, with a view to the ministry. Will you and my brother be looking out for suitable persons to be ready by the time I return"⁽²⁾. This marks the origin of these theological seminaries, which were afterwards carried out by Robert Haldane on so great a scale.

It was not, however, to Dr Bogue at Gosport that the instruction/

(1) Address to the Public pp. 82-83
 (2) Memoirs of Haldanes p. 231.

instruction of the first class was committed. Representations were made to Mr Haldane that if the students were sent to Hampshire, it would react unfavourably on his projects for evangelising Scotland, for Dr Bogue's politics were suspect. To these representations Mr Haldane yielded and entrusted the charge of the first class to the Rev. Greville Ewing.⁽³⁾ This class was formed in January 1799 and commenced their studies in Edinburgh but removed to Glasgow when their tutor took charge of the Tabernacle there. It commenced with twenty four students, all of these being Presbyterians and none of them Congregationalists in sentiment. "Some of us", says one of them, "belonged to the National Establishment, others to the Relief, and not a few were Burghers and Anti-Burghers But before the termination of our prescribed course of study we found ourselves decided and intelligent Congregationalists".⁽⁴⁾ In December 1800 they completed their course of study and there were applications⁽⁵⁾ for them all from various towns of Scotland.

The second class commenced in January 1800 at Dundee under Mr Innes. It numbered between fifty and sixty and included some who had been catechists in the service of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. After a year with Mr Innes they removed to Glasgow and continued under Mr Ewing's instructions for fifteen months. On this class terminating their studies and being sent to various parts of Scotland Mr Ewing relinquished his connection with the seminary, which was then transferred to Glasgow and brought more under the control of Mr Haldane and his brother.⁽⁶⁾

In July 1801 a third class was collected at Dundee and/

(3) Ibid p. 246

(4) Greville Ewing p. 196

(5) Philip. J. Campbell p. 283

(6) Kinniburgh's MSS (Gen. Act.) p.30: Memoirs of Haldane p. 329.

and removed to Edinburgh twelve months later. The students' course of study was interrupted by their being sent out to officiate as preachers at the end of their first year, and they therefore did not finish till 1804.

The fourth class, which, with the third was united, began in Edinburgh in 1802. Together the two classes numbered about fifty and included some who were married and had families. Messrs Aikman and John Campbell acted as theological tutors and Mr Thomas Wemyss as a classical tutor. (7)

In 1803 a fifth class was organised. Among the students were two young men who were later to take a prominent place in the denomination, Dr Russel and John Watson, the first Secretary of the Congregational Union of Scotland.

This class, Dr Lindsay Alexander declares, (8) was divided into two parties, the liberals and the conservatives or more accurately the Sandemanians and the Anti-Sandemanians. He further contends that the former (9) had the sanction of "one at least of the tutors if not also of the patron of the institution". As regards the latter's leanings to Sandemanianism, or at least to the Sandemanian idea of Church order and discipline there can be little doubt. Later events at the Tabernacle prove it. But that, Cowie the tutor, embraced Sandemanianism or encouraged his students thereto has been denied by more than one of them. (9) The writings of Ecking,

Glas and Sandeman did greatly influence for a time many of this class so that there were frequent heated discussions. Further classes were formed in 1804, 1805 and 1806. When the class of 1806 concluded their course of study in the Spring of 1808, most of the men were sent by Mr Haldane to England as the Society/

(7) Philip. J. Campbell p. 283-4

(8) W.L. Alexander, "John Watson" p.44

(9) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act) p.52

symmetrical
equilibrium

Society for propagating the Gospel at Home had been broken up some time before. A ninth class was organised in 1807 but it was a very small one. On the dispersal of this class in December 1808 the Seminary was given up, after having sent out nearly three hundred students into the world. ⁽¹⁰⁾ In addition to these classes conducted at Robert Haldane's expense during ten years, there was another taught at Armagh by Rev. Mr Hamilton, and at least two others in Scotland, one at Elgin under Mr Ballantine and another at Grantown-on-Spey under Mr L. Macintosh. This last class, however, was of a later date and it did not meet till 1820 long after Mr Haldane had severed his connection with Congregationalism. ⁽¹¹⁾

The course of study prescribed in these classes extended over two years, with an annual vacation of six weeks, and embraced English Grammar and rhetoric, the elements of Greek and Hebrew - the last three classes had Latin in addition - and lectures on systematic theology. Besides attending lectures by the tutors and preparing for them, the students had to compose essays and sermons, sometimes upon prescribed subjects, sometimes upon subjects chosen by themselves, and these were submitted for criticism to Mr Haldane or one of the tutors. They were accustomed also on one day in each week to engage in the exposition of a passage of Scripture appointed for that purpose; each student in rotation offering his remarks upon a portion of it the tutor criticising and summing up. The senior students on Sundays were often engaged in preaching and several preaching stations in and around Edinburgh being supplied by them. "In such exercises the junior students", according to Dr Lindsay Alexander, "were but sparingly engaged; but by way of compensation

they were required to go through/

(10) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act) pp. 32-33: Scot. Cong.

Jubilee Services pp. 69-70.

(11) Memoirs of Haldanes p. 331.

through, a certain amount of historical reading in the works of Mosheim, Milne, Rollin and Robertson, on which they were liable to be examined. The amount prescribed was not less than six hundred pages a week - an admirable regulation could mind be fed like horses, at the rate of a fixed quantity of fodder each day!⁽¹²⁾"

The students were supported by Robert Haldane and received from him for that purpose £24 each for the first year and £30 each for the second. They had also medical attention when needed, their education and their class books and access to a large and well selected library. A teacher of French was provided for those who were willing to study that language, and that they might lack nothing when sent forth as preachers, they received instruction in Church music. All this it should be remembered was furnished at the expense of Robert Haldane. The Seminary, it has been computed, must have cost him more than £20,000.⁽¹³⁾

"Amongst the three hundred sent forth from these classes before they were altogether given up," say Dr Struthers of the Relief Church, "there were some choice spirits who having got a start in learning pushed on their private studies with vigour and obtained success."⁽¹⁴⁾ This is quite correct. One thinks at once of David Russel, William Orme, John Paterson and others in this connection. But what of the rest who are long since forgotten? Most of them were pious, zealous and consistent men who in their day acquitted themselves as faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. They were faced with many discouragements and difficulties. Often times they had to struggle against opposition/

(12) W.L. Alexander, "John Watson" pp. 31, 32, 33

(13) Ibid pp. 29-30

(14) Struthers, Hist. of Relief Church p. 402

opposition from without and dissension within the Church; and when the Churches divided on the question of Baptism in 1808, in many instances they were left with a mere handful of hearers and had to attempt to build up their Churches afresh when it was not easy to do so, for the early enthusiasm had spent itself. Some of course became disheartened and relinquished the work, but very many faithfully stuck to their posts. They, perhaps, never gathered large congregations but by their Christian character and faithful labours they exerted an influence in their respective communities and beyond them and so that long after they had passed away they were remembered with affection and gratitude by many both of their own and other Churches to whom by their life and labours they had brought much good. The work of the Seminary was not in vain nor was the money spent on it wasted. There was sent forth a succession of preachers who did meet the spiritual needs of the times in which they lived and whose labours were greatly owned of God.

(xi) CONTROVERSEY AND SEPARATION.

By the end of 1807 some eighty five Churches had been formed on the Congregational plan throughout Scotland. The wonderful progress and achievements of the first decade of their history augured well for future successes and triumphs. But a time of testing was at hand. Questions were then raised which seriously affected the movement - questions relating to Church order and to the ordinances of Christ which unfortunately were discussed with an acerbity which rent the denomination and even for a while threatened its very existence.

"The first public manifestation of a difference of opinion likely to issue a change of practice", says Orme, "was given in Mr Haldane's 'Social Worship', in which he contends for public exhortation in the Churches on the Lord's Day, by the brethren; and for a plurality of pastors in every Church, though the most of them should be employed in Secular business."⁽¹⁾ Mutual exhortation was not unknown among the Churches. Provision had been made for it in the rules which Greville Ewing had drawn up⁽²⁾ for the Tabernacle at Glasgow, but as a part, and an essential part of the Sunday services (and for this James Haldane argued) it was a novelty, for hitherto it had been confined to a week night meeting of the congregation. In an "Address to the Church of Christ, Leith Walk, Edinburgh" of a later date (1807) James Haldane maintained that not only exhortation but also the exercise of discipline/

(1) Orme in London Christian Instructor (1819) p. 782

(2) Greville Ewing p. 237.

line should take place publicly at the Sunday services. Here too, was an innovation, for discipline until then had been exercised in the presence of the members alone. It was otherwise in the Apostolic Churches, James Haldane argued. These had public exhortations by the brethren and public exercise of discipline on the Lord's Day. Therefore it must be so in all true Churches of Christ, for God has established an order and to that order we must adhere. "No dispensing power has He given us respecting any of His ordinances"⁽³⁾. According to Greville Ewing, even before this time Robert Haldane, having been persuaded to study the writings of Glas and Sandeman had become enamoured of their teaching as previously he had been prejudiced against it, and their view of Church Government had become his.⁽⁴⁾ His brother, it would seem, had become ~~similarly~~ convinced, for it was the Glasite idea of Churches which would be replicas to the minutest detail of the primitive Apostolic Churches that he had in view, and (that) it was some of the distinctive practices of the Glasites that he desired to introduce.

To the same end was the tract by which James Haldane's Social Worship and "Address" were followed up. This was "A Treatise on the Elders' office; shewing the Qualifications of Elders, and how the first Churches obtained them; also their Appointment, Duties, and Maintenance; the Necessity of a Presbytery in every Church and Exhortation, and the Observance of every Church Ordinance on the Lord's Day, in order amongst other ends to the obtaining of Elders. By William Ballantyne." This pamphlet which advocated a plurality of Elders and indeed/

(3) James Haldane, "An Address to the Church" p. 4.

(4) Ewing. Facts and Documents p. 82.

indeed struck at the entire order of the Public Worship of the Churches, was widely circulated by Robert Haldane as embodying his views. As was inevitable, it provoked much discussion as to the pastor's or elder's office in a Church of Christ, but the discussion did not end there. Soon everything became a matter for debate and dispute, and a restless passion for novelty raged in the bosom of many influential members of the Congregational Churches, and infected even some of the pastors. "Matters came to such a pitch that to train pious men for the ministry - to have public collections for the support of Gospel ordinances, - for ministers to wear black clothes, - was pronounced Anti-Christian. Various other novelties were zealously enforced; while those ^{who} would not embrace these things, were accused of opposing the cause of God." (5)

The Churches were blundering into most of the literalisms of the Glasites, and like them were ^{so exalting} the letter above the spirit of Scripture that despite their promising beginning, they were being wrecked and rent by debates and disputes, not on the great verities of the faith but on minor matters.

(6)
Is it probable, as some have suggested, that in time these differences might have been amicably settled? We doubt it, for there were plainly in the Church two distinct parties with very different ideas of the order and government of the Church. The one were Congregationalists and desired that things should be conducted after the system of the English Independents. The others were really Glasites in their ideas of Church Worship and discipline. To reconcile two parties so opposed was not an impossible/

(5) Greville Ewing pp. 327-328

(6) Orme in London Christian Instructor (1819) p. 783:
W.L. Alexander, J. Watson p.100.

impossible task but certainly a most difficult one. But all likelihood of that vanished when another and greater question - that of Baptism - was raised. Keener and fiercer became the controversy so that ere long even close friends were separated. This crisis was brought about by James Haldane and his brother adopting and advocating Baptist views. James Haldane has been represented as making a sudden change a few days after Archibald McLean's "Review of Wardlaw's Lectures on Infant Baptism" had appeared; but this was published in 1807 and the pastor-- of the Tabernacle was not baptised till the following year.⁽⁷⁾ From a letter to John Campbell dated February 19th 1808, it is plain that on the question of Baptism he had been thinking for a considerable time. He writes that, at various times he has entertained doubts as to the Scriptural authority for infant baptism. The persistence of these doubts made him determine, at the end of 1804, fully to examine the Scriptures at his leisure, "with prayer for direction and a desire to be led to a right conclusion." The result was that, after much reading, and thought, on the subject, his doubts so much increased that a request being made to him to baptise a child, he was obliged to inform the Church, that, although his mind/^{was not} made up to become himself a Baptist, yet⁽⁸⁾ he could not conscientiously baptise children. In that undecided condition, however, he did not long remain, for it would seem that early in March 1808 he definitely adopted Baptist views and submitted to the ordinance. Robert, his brother, about this time also changed his sentiments on infant baptism, and later in the year was⁽⁹⁾ immersed/

(7) Hist. of Baptists in Scotland p. 58

(8) Memoirs of the Haldanes p. 357

(9) Hist, of Baptists in Scotland p. 58

immersed. It was not James Haldane's intention that his adoption of Baptist views should affect his relations with the Tabernacle Congregation. The letter to John Campbell already referred to makes this clear, for he thus concludes; "I informed the Church that, although I were baptised, I should be of the same mind as formerly, that the Baptists and Paedo-Baptists might have fellowship together." In a subsequent letter of 21st April he is still of the opinion that, although he himself has adopted Baptist views and been baptised, with regard to the Church this will be a matter of forbearance. "If we are all acting on conviction," he writes, "and both desiring to know the will of Jesus in this, and in all other respects, I have no apprehension of disunion. Of one thing I am sure, that all who love the Lord Jesus should, so far as they are agreed, walk by the same rule and mind the same things; and if it be improper for Baptists to be in fellowship in the same Church it must be equally improper to have occasional fellowship in private." But these expectations were not realised. His views of mutual forbearance were not reciprocated, and a rupture took place in the Tabernacle Congregation. Two hundred of the members adhered to their pastor but a considerable number withdrew. Some of these rejoined Presbyterian Churches; some went to Mr Aikman's Church; while "about a hundred" formed themselves anew into a Church order as a Congregational Church in Bernard's Rooms, West Thistle Street on Sunday the 26th March 1808, and in the summer of that year called Mr Innes of Dundee to be their minister. Mr Haldane's renouncing of infant baptism apparently precipitated this division, but it ought to be remembered/

(10) Memoirs of Haldanes pp. 357, 358

(11) Kinniburgh MSS (Albany Street Church, Edin) p.3.

remembered that this was not the sole cause of the withdrawal of so many members. Their pastor's changed views regarding various parts of the mode of worship followed by the Church and his insistence "on introducing exhortation by many of the brethren who felt inclined to exhort on the Lord's Day - discipline in public and the kiss of charity" ⁽¹²⁾ was another and important ground of difference and had something, perhaps much, to do with the decision to separate and form a Church that was neither Baptist nor Glasite but Congregational, as the Tabernacle had been at its inception.

The rupture of the Edinburgh Tabernacle was unfortunately repeated elsewhere. "The new notions spread over most of the Churches in this connection, and contention, strife of words, jealousies and divisions followed, of which none but such as passed through the painful scene ⁽¹³⁾ of those days can have any adequate idea." In Glasgow, Perth, Wick, Arbroath, Falkirk and many other towns and villages considerable numbers, adopting Mr Haldane's views on Baptism and Church order and worship, withdrew and ⁽¹⁴⁾ allied themselves with the old Scotch Baptists. The denomination was rent in twain and "one of the noblest schemes which modern times had witnessed for diffusing religion and evangelising the population of the country ⁽¹⁵⁾ was "in a great measure laid in ruins."

It was a rupture much to be regretted and one may well wish that it could have been avoided. Yet it seems to us that once questions of Church order had been raised it was well-nigh inevitable, for in these first Churches were two distinct parties - those who were Congregationalists by conviction and those who were Congregationalists by

accident/

(12) Ibid p. 2

(13) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act) p.50

(14) His. of Baptists in Scotland p. 59

(15) Struthers, Hist. of Relief Church p. 407

'accident. The Haldanes belonged to the latter. Originally members of the Church of Scotland they found for a time an ecclesiastical refuge in Congregationalism, but the proposals they put forward for the conduct of worship shewed, even before they became Baptists, that they had moved away from Congregationalism. Not in doctrine but in ecclesiastical outlook they were Sandemanians, and were they living today they would be Plymouth Brethren. Weekly observance of the Sacrament, mutual exhortation on the Lord's Day, an untrained ministry, baptism of believers - these, of course, are distinctive tenets of the Brethren, and it was just these that the Haldanes advocated and sought to put into practice at the Tabernacle. But Congregationalism is not Brethernism. To convinced Congregationalists like John Aikman and Greville Ewing, the views of the Haldanes were "destructive, both of the pastoral office, and of all order in the House of God;"⁽¹⁶⁾ and that they should accept them was not to be expected. That the Haldanes and they should part company was inevitable. The tragedy was that the parting should have been attended with so much soreness and recrimination, and should have resulted in serious hurt and hindrance to missionary enterprise in Scotland.

(16) ^{Jwy} Memoirs of the Haldanes p. 359

(xii) REBUILDING - The Theological Academy:
The Congregational Union of Scotland:

The division of 1808 left the Churches which had declined to accept the new views in a weak and shattered condition. Many of them had lost a large proportion of their members: only in the large towns was the membership now numerous. Most of the Churches were poor; and if previously they had found it difficult to support their pastors, much more difficult was it for them now where they were divided in sentiment, fewer in number, and all outside aid was withdrawn from them. A number of the buildings were the property of Robert Haldane and others were deeply indebted to him; he claimed the restoration of the former and the immediate payment of the debts due on the latter.⁽¹⁾ A heavy load of debt therefore impeded the efforts of very many congregations. In consequence of these things some promising spheres of usefulness had to be relinquished, and others were carried on only at the cost of much self-denial on the part of the pastors. Some of the latter betook themselves to teaching and other occupations to augment their scanty incomes, while others continued to labour, managing as best they could, upon the slender pittance which their people could⁽²⁾ afford.

The separation from the Haldanes meant also the loss of the Seminary for the training of future ministers, since from the first this institution had been supported at the sole expense of Robert Haldane. Any further supply therefore of pastors was not to be expected from that quarter.

To/

(1) Orme, London Christian Instructor (1819) pp. 783, 784
 (2) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen. Act) pp. 51, 52;
 Greville Ewing p. 393.

To these two problems of Church aid and theological training it was imperative that the Churches should address themselves if the denomination was not to die out in Scotland. With the latter a beginning was made early in 1811.

In 1804 Greville Ewing had drawn up a "Memorial concerning a Theological Academy", in which he suggested that the training of men for the ministry was the business of the Churches and not of one individual. He further emphasised the need for ^{an} educated ministry, but the proposal did not find favour with the Haldanes and its publication was deferred. ⁽³⁾

In 1808, however, in the light of the new situation he returned to the subject and published "A Memorial on Education for the Ministry of the Gospel" and the matter was thus brought before the Churches. Nothing, however, seems to have been done until 1810 when meetings of representatives from various Churches were held in Perth and Dundee. An address from these meetings was sent to all the Churches urging the need of some plan for the educating of men for the ministry. The response was of such a nature as to encourage definite action being taken. A meeting of ministers was, therefore, convened in Glasgow on January 22nd 1811 to consider "what should be done for affording a supply of preachers to meet the wants of the Churches". The result was a further meeting - this time of ministers and brethren - on 13th March 1811, when after a sermon by Dr Wardlaw, it was agreed to form the Glasgow Theological Academy. Dr Wardlaw and Greville Ewing were appointed tutors, and a plan of education was presented "embracing Latin, Greek and Hebrew; logic, natural philosophy, mathematics, general history and theology/

(3) Ewing, Facts & Documents pp. 83 & 99.

theology, connected with a comparative view of philosophical and Christian morality." "The course was to be four or five years, if necessary. The more advanced branches of classical learning were to be obtained at the University, the expenses of which, as well as the support of the students, in cases requiring it, were to be borne by the funds of the institution. This assistance was to be continued for one year at least after the commencement of their ministerial labours, if within that time they failed to obtain a ministerial charge. All persons received as students were to be recommended by their respective pastors with consent of the Churches to which they belonged, decided piety being a qualification indispensable. A Committee was appointed to manage its affairs and an appeal drawn up to the Churches on its behalf. The Academy as soon as possible thereafter came into operation, and the first class of students numbered eight. The number of this and subsequent classes would have been much larger, but the committee were hampered by the small amount of funds at their disposal.⁽⁴⁾

"A supply of preachers, however, without the existing Churches being assisted to support their pastors," writes Kinniburgh, "would not have removed the evil. With the view of giving relief the Congregational Union was formed in the latter end of 1812"⁽⁵⁾. The suggestion that something of this nature might be attempted was made in the course of conversation among some ministers and office-bearers in the neighbourhood of Musselburgh in September 1812. The company - consisting of Mr Arthur, pastor of the Congregational Church, Dalkeith, Messrs Rae and Leyden, members of that Church; Mr Watson/

(4) Greville Ewing pp. 376 et seq.: W.L. Alexander, R. Wardlaw pp. 124-5.

(5) Kinniburgh MSS (Gen.Act.) p. 54

Watson pastor of the Congregational Church, Musselburgh, and Mr Tait, one of Mr Watson's deacons - eagerly discussed the suggestion. The matter was further discussed at a district meeting at Dalkeith a week later and eventually laid before a meeting of delegates from the Churches in Edinburgh on the first Wednesday of the ensuing November. This meeting, which was held in Thistle Street Chapel, was largely attended by representatives from all over the country. "After prayer and careful deliberation, the plan of the Society was agreed upon, a committee was appointed for the first year, and an address to the Churches drawn up. In the Society thus founded Mr Watson and Mr Payne were continued as joint Secretaries. The first annual meeting was appointed to be held in Edinburgh on 6th May 1813". The avowed object of the Union at its inception was "The Relief of Congregational Churches in Scotland, united in the faith and hope of the Gospel, who from their poverty, the fewness of their numbers, or from debt upon their places of worship are unable to, provide for the ministration of the word of God in that way which would tend most to their own edification and the eternal happiness of those around them.⁽⁶⁾ These last words are worthy of especial notice, for they reveal the original aims of the union to have been two-fold - Church aid and home missionary. The union originated in the felt necessity of doing something for the assistance and support of the poorer Churches, but along with that primary object this other went with it, viz. the spreading of the Gospel in the communities in which these Churches were set. The Institution thus formed was essentially a Home Missionary Society, The support of the weaker Churches was intended only as a means/

(6) Greville Nwing pp. 391-392: W.L. Alexander, J. Watson pp. 103-106.

means to an end - the end being the evangelisation of Scotland. In the words of the prospectus of the Union, aid was given to the Churches not only to enable them to minister "to their own edification" but also "to the eternal happiness of those around them." In later days this latter purpose of the Union had been largely lost sight of. The working of its Home Mission Committee receives but meagre support, but at the beginning it was altogether different. Then so prominent was the feature of the home-mission work supported by the Union that a perusal of its early reports might lead one to think of it rather as a society for the evangelisation of Scotland than a Church Aid Society.

Several Churches declined to join the Union on its formation. Some objected to it on the ground that it was incompatible with the Independency of the Churches, others objected to it because it had not based itself on a declaration of religious opinions, so that people might know what were the sentiments of those for whose behoof it was instituted. Fifty five Churches, however, originally ~~combined~~ in the Union in 1812 and the number was afterwards increased by the addition of others who had stood aloof for a time.

The effects of the institution of the Union speedily became manifest. Many pastors who had been compelled to resort to secular work for support were enabled through the help furnished by the Union to give their undivided attention to pastoral and evangelical work, and not a few Churches were saved from the extinction that threatened them. The Union did not, and could not, regain for the Churches the popular acclamation in their favour which once they had, but on its formation it rendered a needed service at a very critical time. Indeed it is not too much to say that
its/

its creation preserved the denomination from that decay which has been the fate of the early Congregational experiments of the Glasites and the Old Scots Independents. Today Congregational Churches may be few in number and small in membership compared with the great Church of Scotland, but few and feeble though they may be, how much more so would they be had there not been brought into being in 1812 the Congregational Union of Scotland, "one (7) of the chief ornaments and greatest bulwark of our Churches"

The excitement and sweeping triumphs of the first days were no more. The Churches and their labours no longer occupied the place that once they did in the attention of the people. That was inevitable for something of their courage and zeal these early Congregationalists had imparted to others, so that now they had taken their place beside them in aggressive evangelism. Once Congregational ministers were the only itinerant preachers of the Gospel in destitute parts of the country. Once they could rally round them, wherever they appeared, many who knew and loved the Gospel, though holding other than Congregational views of Church government. Once the Congregationalist were the chief promoters of Sunday Schools - distributors of religious tracts, and leaders in all homes and foreign missionary enterprise. It was so no longer; others were taking an honourable part in all these efforts. The Congregationalists' views of Gospel truth had ceased to be singular; others were preaching the Gospel as freely and faithfully as they did; it was hardly to be expected they could retain the same prominence or exert the same drawing influence as when there were few who held it so purely or preached it so/

so faithfully as themselves.

The great days from the point of view of crowds and influence were over, and it was so in measure because the Haldanes and their converts had done their work so well. But Congregationalism, now beyond the preliminary experimental stage, had its part still to play in maintaining the cause of the Gospel in Scotland. Under the leadership of Greville Ewing and Ralph Warllaw a new era of unity and consolidation was beginning, and useful, though less spectacular service to the Kingdom of God at home and abroad were the Congregational Churches of Scotland to render.

LIST OF TRACTS DISTRIBUTED.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Short Sermons | 2000 |
| Three Dialogues between a Minister and one of his Hearers on the true Principles of Religion | 2000 |
| Address to Strangers | 4000 |
| Affectionate Address on the Importance of Religion | 3000 |
| Friendly advice to all whom it may concern | 5000 |
| An Account of the Conversation of A Negro | 2000 |
| Poor Joseph | 2000 |
| Affectionate Address to Young Christians | 150 |
| Regulations for Sabbath Schools, copied from the Missionary Magazine for May 1797 | 250 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 20,400 |
| | <hr/> <hr/> |

"Journal of A Tour" pp. 39, 44, 35.

APPENDIX I.**Details of the Preaching Tour of 1797.**

| <u>July</u> | <u>No. of hearers</u> | |
|---|-----------------------|---------|
| 12. N. Queen's ferry, school room | | 50 |
| 13. Keltie bridge | | 100 |
| 14. Perth Hospital, Scone, Market-Cross, Cupar Angus, Mason's Hall | | 200 |
| 15. Meigle, church-yard, Glamis | | 50 |
| 16. Kirriemuir, market place | morning | 200 |
| do. | evening | 1000 |
| Forfar, market cross | | 100 |
| do. | | 300 |
| 17. Kirriemuir | | 400 |
| Forfar, Street | | |
| Brechin | evening | crowded |
| 18. do. morning, 6 a.m. | | |
| Montrose Burgher Meeting house | | |
| 19; Bervie twice | | |
| Stonehaven do. | | |
| 22. Old Aberdeen, College-court, twice, very crowded. | | |
| 23. Gilcomston, and Old Town, morning | | |
| Gilkomston | | |
| Aberdeen | | |
| College-close | | |
| 24. College-close | | |
| New town | | |
| Ellon, twice | | |
| Peterhead, Town-house stairs | | 600 |
| 25./ | | |

| <u>July</u> | <u>No. of hearers</u> |
|---|-----------------------|
| 25. Peterhead Town-house stairs | 350 |
| 26. Fraserburgh, Market-cross | 100 |
| Rosehearty | |
| 28. Banff, Relief Chapel | |
| A Village near Banff | |
| 29. Banff, Battery Green | |
| do. evening | |
| Portsoy | |
| Cullen | |
| <u>August</u> | |
| 1. Elgin, Street | 600 |
| 2. Forres, Market Cross | 800 |
| 3. Auldearn | |
| Nairn | 600 |
| 4. do. | do. |
| 5. do. | |
| do. | |
| 6. Fort George Chapel, to the garrison, Campbelltown | |
| do. | |
| Inverness four times on a hill adjoining to the town, and in the Street | 1500 to 2000 |
| 7. do. twice in the Street, very large congregations | |
| 8. do. | 500 |
| Mr Rate was left here, a table of whose journal shall be given at the conclusion of the following, by Messrs Haldane and Aikman. | |
| Nairn Town house stairs | 700 |
| 9. do. | 750 |
| Auldearn | 300 |
| Forres | 450 |

| <u>August</u> | <u>No. of hearers</u> | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| 10. Elgin Street | morning | 700 |
| do. | evening | 1000 |
| 11. Brughhead | | |
| Embarked for Orkney, and preached in the boat to the crew and passengers. | | |
| 12. Arrived at Kirkwall at eight a.m. preached at half past six p.m. in the Palace yard to | | 800 |
| 13. do. | morning | 1200 or 3000 |
| do. | evening | 3000 |
| Shapinshay twice | | 500 |
| 14. Kirkwall Palace yard | morning | 1200 |
| do. | evening | 2300 |
| 15. Stromness | | 500 |
| 16. do. | morning | 500 |
| Kirkwall | evening | 200 |
| 17. do. | morning | 2000 |
| do. | evening | 4000 |
| 18. do. | morning | 3000 |
| do. | evening | 4000 |
| Shapinshay | | 60 |
| 19. Kirkwall | | |
| Morning and evening to nearly the same number. | | |
| Orphir | | 200 |
| 20. Kirkwall four times | | |
| Number of hearers two last times, about | | 6000 |
| 21. Do. | morning | 900 |
| Do. | evening | 1700 |
| Rendal | | |
| Eggleshay | | |
| 22. Kirkwall | morning | 1500 |
| do. | evening | 2000 |
| Tankerness/ | | |

| <u>August</u> | <u>No. of hearers</u> |
|--|-----------------------|
| 22. Tankerness | 500 |
| 23. Eday | 300 |
| Rousay and Eggalsay | 200 |
| 24. Sanday | 750 |
| do. | do. |
| Rousay | 300 |
| Papay Westray | 70 |
| 25. Westray | 300 |
| do. in another place | 500 |
| North Ronaldsay | 350 |
| 26. Stronsay | 800 |
| Fairy, containing about 60 souls | 30 |
| Eggleshay | 200 |
| 27. do. twice | 400 |
| Rousay, exhorted several persons at a funeral. | |
| Kirkwall | 2500 |
| 28. do. | 2000 |
| do. | do. |
| Deerness | 800 |
| Tankerness | |
| 29. Left Kirkwall after a stay of fifteen days. | |
| Burray | 100 |
| South Ronaldsay | 40 |
| 30. do. in another place | 350 |
| do. at the Fairy | 150 |
| Left Orkney after having preached 55 times there and in the North isles. | |
| Arrived at Thurso, preached in the yard of the Antiburgher meeting house to | 300 |
| One of the itinerants having met with an accident, was confined here for several weeks, but every evening addressed from 50 to 100 | |

September/

SeptemberNo. of hearers

| | | | |
|-----|--|---------|------|
| 1. | do. | morning | 200 |
| | | evening | 500 |
| 2. | Do. Meeting house | | 800 |
| | do. a large yard | | 1500 |
| 3. | do. do. | morning | 1700 |
| | do. do. | evening | 2000 |
| 4. | Twice each day | | 700 |
| 5. | do. | | 800 |
| 6. | do. | | 1000 |
| 7. | Reister, Parish of Dunnet | | 300 |
| | Cleoch, Parish of Bower | | 400 |
| 8. | Twice each day at Thurso | | 300 |
| 9. | do. | | 800 |
| 10. | do. | morning | 3000 |
| | do. at two p.m. | | 3000 |
| | do. evening | 2000 to | 3000 |
| 11. | Olrig | | 300 |
| | Quarrycrook, Parish of Halkirk | | 600 |
| 12. | Shemster, Parish of Reay | 200 to | 300 |
| 13. | Thurso Meeting house | | 600 |
| | One of the itinerants crossed upon invitation to the island of Walls in Orkney, and preached there | | |
| 14. | to | | 200 |
| | Flota | | 40 |
| 15. | Walls | | 200 |
| 16. | He crossed again to | | |
| 17. | Thurso | morning | 1500 |
| | do. | evening | 3000 |
| 18. | do. | morning | 600 |
| | do. | evening | 800 |
| | Thurdistaff/ | | |

SeptemberNo. of hearers

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------|------|
| 18. | Thurdistaff, Parish of Olrig | | 600 |
| 20. | Mey, Parish of Cannisbay | | 200 |
| | Ratter, Dunnet | | 120 |
| 21. | Thurso, twice | 500 to | 700 |
| 22. | do. do. | 500 to | 700 |
| 23. | do. meeting house | | |
| 24. | do. | morning | 3000 |
| | do. | evening | 4000 |
| Among the last, there were individuals from every Parish in the County of Caithness. | | | |
| 25. | Catchery, Parish of Watten | | 300 |
| 26. | Wick | morning | 400 |
| | do. | evening | 900 |
| 27. | do. | morning & evening | 900 |
| 28. | Aucorn, Parish of Wick | | 400 |
| 29. | Wick | morning & evening | 1000 |
| 30. | do. | do. | 500 |

October

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------|------|
| 1. | Wick | morning | 2400 |
| | do. | evening | 4000 |
| 2. | Borrowstown, Parish of Wick | 300 to | 400 |
| 3. | Wick | morning & evening | do. |
| 4. | do. | do. | do. |
| 5. | Freswick, Parish of Cannisbay | 300 to | 400 |
| 6. | Wick | morning & evening | 300 |
| 7. | do. | do. | do. |
| 8. | do. | morning | 2000 |
| | do. | evening | 4000 |
| 9./ | | | |

OctoberNo. of hearers

| | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---------|-----|
| 9. | Bilpster, a few miles from Wick | | 300 |
| 10. | Wick | morning | 400 |
| | do. | evening | 700 |
| 11. | Glyth, Parish of Latheron | | 700 |
| | Kirk of Latheron | | 200 |
| 12. | Dunbeath | | 70 |
| 14. | Dornoch, town house | | 60 |
| | Tain, stairs of the Kirk | | 300 |
| 15. | Tain | morning | 450 |
| 16. | do. | evening | 500 |
| | Milltown | | 200 |
| | Invergordon | | 100 |
| 17. | do. | | 350 |
| | Drummond | | 200 |
| | Dingwall Street | | 150 |
| 18. | do. town house | 250 | 300 |

Arrived this day at Inverness and found their associate, whom they had left there on the 11th of August at their embarkation for Orkney.

Table of his preaching follows.

August

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|---------|-------|
| 11. | Findhorn Relief Meeting house | | 500 |
| 13. | Inverness | morning | 3-400 |
| | | evening | 2000 |
| 16. | Drakies | | 200 |
| 17. | Auld-dowrie | | |
| 18. | Cloughmeherry | | 100 |
| 20. | Inverness | morning | 400 |
| | | evening | 2000 |

This week at Dingwall, Fairntosh and Beaulley.

AugustNo. of hearers

27. Inverness

morning 400

evening 2000

September

3.

morning 300

evening 2000

Indisposed this week.

10. Inverness, in Raining's School

morning 150

evening 2000

13. Street

150

17. Inverness

morning 500

do. evening great number.

22. do. Shere

24. do.

morning 400

do.

evening 1000

26. Avoch

3000

27. Fortrose

400

Gromarty Cross

300

28. Dingwall

150

Kelbucky

120

October

1. Inverness hill

Evening great number.

Invergordon

200

do.

300

8. Inverness

morning 200

evening great number

10, 11, 12, 13. Campbelltown

200 to 300

15. Inverness

morning
200 to 300

Evening great number.

His brethren arrived on the 18th.

| <u>October</u> | | <u>No. of hearers</u> |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 19. | Inverness Street | 300 |
| 20. | do. morning | 300 |
| 21. | Campbelltown, Fort-George, Inverness. | |
| 22. | do. Street | 500 |
| | Methodist Chapel | |
| | Campbeltown, | morning 300 |
| | do. | evening 400 |
| | Fort George | 800 |
| | Nairn | 350 |
| 23. | Auldearn | 800 |
| | Findhorn, | morning & evening |
| 24. | Elgin | 350 |
| | Fochabers | 150 |
| | do. | 30 to 40 |
| | Keith | 400 |
| 25. | do. | 300 |
| 26. | Huntly | 500 |
| 27. | Cullen | 11 or 12 |
| | Banff | 150 |
| 28. | do. | |
| | Macduff | 50 |
| | Banff | 200 |
| | Inverury | 200 |
| | Oldrain | 20 |
| | Huntly | 60 to 70 |
| | | evening 800 |
| 29. | Aberdeen Street | 3000 to 4000 |
| | Gilcomston | do. |
| | Old Town, Aberdeen | 100 |
| | Relief Kirk | 1400 |
| | Gaelic/ | |

OctoberNo. of hearers

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 29. | Gaelic chapel | 1000 |
| 30. | Gilconston | 200 |
| | Aberdeen | 700 |
| | Stonehaven | 30 to 40 |
| 31. | Montrose, Burgher Meeting house. | 300 |

November

| | | |
|----|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. | do. | 200 |
| | Brechin | 300 |
| | Methodist Chapel | |
| 2. | do. | 160 |
| | Forfar | 200 |
| 3. | do. | 30 to 40 |
| 4. | Cupar Angus | morning 300 |
| | | evening 400 |
| 5. | Kirriemuir | morning 400 |
| | | evening 500 |
| 6. | Perth Relief Kirk | 500 to 600 |
| 7. | Auchterarder | 300. |

APPENDIX II.The Origins of Churches Existing At, or Prior to Formation of the
Union in 1812.ABERDEEN, - GEORGE STREET (now BELMONT STREET) - 1798.

(1)

This, the oldest Congregational Church in Scotland, owes its origin to Mr George Moir, hosier in Aberdeen who having "been convinced that the first Christian Churches were Congregational or Independent by reading Lord King's Inquiry into the Constitution of the Christian Church;"⁽²⁾ set his heart upon seeing such a Church in Aberdeen. He took counsel with two friends, and after "occasional interviews and conversations" the three held their first formal meeting on Friday, the 15th of September 1797 to consider what action might be taken. They were later joined by six others. A hall was rented for worship while they were on the outlook for a suitable site on which to build a chapel. Ground being procured, a place of worship capable of seating 1200 was erected and opened in George Street on 2nd September 1798. A fortnight later the 16th September, the Church was formed, the nine brethren standing up and avowing "the Congregational discipline, and their relation to each other as Church members by giving to each other the right hand of fellowship."⁽³⁾ The first Minister was Rev. William Stephens, Bingley, who began his ministry on 25th May 1800, but remained only some three years. In April 1804 he became colleague at the Edinburgh Tabernacle with/

(1) Vide Appendix III

(2) King p. 57

(3) Bulloch pp. 18, 19.

with Mr J.A. Haldane and one of the tutors at the theological Seminary there. Mr John Philip (afterwards Dr Philip of South Africa) succeeded Mr Stephens in 1804. Prior to his settlement there had been trouble in the Church and matters were made worse on his coming by a minority who had objected to the call to him. To test the strength of the dissentients Mr Philip adopted a very drastic course. In May 1806 he dissolved the Church! Out of a membership of 277 only thirty declined to come forward and sign in favour of the new order; The minority had been more noisy than numerous. From that time until the close of his ministry in 1819 the Church enjoyed a period of uninterrupted peace and prosperity.⁽⁴⁾

ABERDEEN - FREDERICK STREET - 1807. Early in the Nineteenth century this the second Congregational Church was formed in Aberdeen. A malt barn which had been used by the first body of Seceders, who set up in Aberdeen in 1756, was used by the Haldanes as a preaching station. Thither a few of the dissentients from the George Street Church had gone to hear the Gospel on Mr Philip dissolving the Church. Mr David Russel (later Dr Russell of Dundee) who had previously taken the services was recalled from Montrose and after some weeks the Church was formally constituted on 8th February 1807 with a membership of 17 (10 male and 7 female members), four of whom were from George Street. The ordination of Mr Russel took place a month later, March 11th.⁽⁵⁾ After a brief ministry/

(4) Bulloch chaps. I-V. passim.

(5) Bulloch pp. 56, 57.

ministry of two years Mr Russel was called to Dundee and for some six years there seems to have been no settled minister. The Church, which was never very large, suffered from the departure of several members who along with others from George Street Church formed a new Church in Blackfriars Street (now Skene Street) in 1820. The cause finally became extinct in 1871.

ABERFELDY - 1800.

This Church originated in 1800 while Mr Hugh Ross a catechist laboured in and about the village. Three of the young men from the theological class at Edinburgh preached in rotation. Later Mr Daniel Dewar (later Principal Dewar of Aberdeen) was for a time there and received a call to the pastorate which he declined. Mr Jas. Kennedy was settled as the first pastor in 1806 and remained for 19 years. During the early years of the Church both pastor and people ~~were~~ encountered much opposition and persecution.

ALLOA - 1810.

This Church was formed in 1810 in which year William Howden was settled as pastor. Of its early history nothing is known. Later it adopted the new views and withdrew from fellowship with other Congregational Churches. In 1851 it ceased to meet.

ANNAN - 1794 or 1796.

The exact date of the formation of the Church at Annan is uncertain, for three different dates have been given/

given. Kinniburgh says that "sometime about the year 1800 a Congregational Church was formed here"⁽⁶⁾. Ross assigns an earlier date, 1794, "in which year Mr Andrew Carnson was ordained minister". He refers to an interesting account of his settlement which was given in the Evangelical Magazine of 1794.⁽⁷⁾ This date might be accepted but for a letter in the Missionary Magazine, Vol. III. pp. 15-16, which points to a third date. This letter is from J. Robertson, Annan, and is dated December 5th 1798. The writer expresses his pleasure at formation of the Aberdeen Church, and remarks that "the sentiments of the Church at Aberdeen are such as the Church ~~here~~ have adopted, of which the writer, though unworthy, has the pastoral care, and which was formed about two years since, in much the same and solemn way in which that of Aberdeen was"⁽⁸⁾. It might, of bourse, be argued that this refers to a second Congregational Church at Annan, but this is extremely improbable. It seems more likely that Mr Carnson ministered to a congregation from some-time in 1794 but that the formal constitution of the Church on the Congregational plan did not take place till a later date. Early in the century the Church got into difficulties and the building was sold to pay the debt upon it. Attempts were made to resuscitate the cause in 1838 but failed. The present Church was not formed till 1843.

ANSTRUTHER - Circa 1800.

The Church here owes its origin to the missionary labours of Mr Rate and Mr James Haldane who both preached with/

(6) Kinniburgh MSS (Sth. Counties) pp.20,21;

(7) Ross p. 242.

(8) Miss. Magazine III. pp. 15,16.

with great acceptance and success. Their converts were "anxious to hold fellowship with each other and to have the ordinances of the Gospel statedly administered among them," and a Church was formed. Preachers from Mr Innes' class at Dundee "supplied" for a length of time, but in response to their appeal for a minister of their own Mr Hastie was ~~settled~~ settled among them in 1802. The Church for a time prospered but secessions to the Baptists and the Bereans much reduced its membership
(9)
about 1812.

ARBROATH - 1801.

This Church dates back to 1801 when certain individuals connected with a fellowship meeting who had confidence in each other as Christians united to form a Church, since they could not "find food for their souls in any of the places of worship in Arbroath". Services were held in the Masons' Hall by preachers from Dundee. Thos. Smith settled in 1801 but there is no record of his ordination. He removed to Garlieston in 1803² and was succeeded by Richard Penman (1803-1814),
(10)
later of Aberdeen.
✓ K. 749. p 77

AVOCH - 1807.

This Church originated in the missionary labours of Alexander Dewar, brother of the pastor at Nairn, in 1805. He began with open-air meetings at seven in the morning and six in the evening on Sundays. Great audiences gathered and such was the impression made that the following year a Church was formed over which he was ordained/

(9) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) Anstruther

(10) Kinniburgh MSS (Forfarshire & Kincardine) pp.42 et. seq.

(11)
ordained as pastor.

AYR - 1804.

In Ayr a Congregational Church was formed in 1804 by converts of a Mr Penman, but no minister was settled till four years later. The Church seems to have been a struggling one from the first and had a chequered history till it^s dissolution in 1878.
A

BALFOUR - 1806.

From 1806-to 1809 a small cause seems to have been in existence here, but with the departure of Thomas McKinnon to Sauchieburn it came to an end.

BANFF - 1809.

On his first preaching tour James Haldane paid a visit to Banff, and by the side of the Deveron preached, to large and interested crowds, but no Church was formed till 12 years later, in 1809, when Joseph Gibb became pastor.

BERVIE - 1803.

Three miles north of Bervie, at Fawside, this Church was originally formed and was the result of the occasional preaching of Mr Cowie, then at Montrose. Adam Paterson, one of Mr Haldane's students, was the first minister. The Church at an early stage was much injured by the pastor & a large section of the members adopting Baptist views. These withdrew and the remnant (12) left called James Mackenzie who settled in 1806.

(11) Ibid (Ross & Sutherland) pp. 2 et. seq.
(12) (Forfarshire & Kincardine) pp. 21 et. seq.

BLAIRGOWRIE - 1803.

In 1802 preachers were sent to Blairgowrie by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. Their preaching attracted considerable attention. Some looked upon them as Vagrants, but a few welcomed them. Some of their converts after a time desired to form a Church on the Congregational plan, for this they deemed according to Scripture, ^{was} it formally constituted by Mr Innes of Dundee in 1803. For long they had "supplies",⁽¹³⁾ but Mr Peter Grant was ordained pastor in 1807.

BREADALBANE - 1802.

In 1800 in this district a religious revival followed the preaching of John Farquharson, a catechist. Much opposition was encountered and Campbell was on one occasion arrested and sent to Aberdeen. Many, however, were converted, and several Churches were formed. The first at ACHARAN ~~xxxxx~~ began with 70 members. Others followed at KILLIN, LAWERS and GLEN LYON. The Churches flourished for a time, but first disputes about Baptism,⁽¹⁴⁾ and later emigration left them in a stricken condition.

BUCKSBURN - Circa 1805.

This was one of several Churches formed in Aberdeenshire about 1805 that had but a very brief existence. So far as can be traced it had but one pastor, Mr Gow. On his resigning the Church ceased to meet.

CALLANDER - 1805.

The Church here was formed in 1805, and by the

end/

(13) Kinniburgh MSS (Perthshire) pp. 85

(14) Ibid pp.

end of 1806 the number of members was thirty six. The preaching of students from Glasgow and also visits from the Breadalbane preachers led to its formation. Unfortunately from the first there was division. The members could not agree as to the choice of a pastor, and the majority took the drastic course of excommunicating ten of the minority. Eventually they agreed on Mr Peter McLaren whose settlement took place on 13th April 1808, but before the close of that year there was another division on the question of Baptism. The number left being unable to support a minister, Mr McLaren had to take up teaching and continued to do so till the formation of the Union when a grant from its funds enabled him to devote his whole time to the
(15)
pastorate.

CAMBUSLANG - 1803.

A number of individuals who had come under the influence of the Haldane Movement in October 1799 communicated with Rev. Greville Ewing "soliciting him to send some of the young men studying for the ministry under his tuition to preach to them and their neighbours". On Mr Ewing agreeing they rented a house as a place of meeting. It was opened by Mr Ewing on 21st November 1799. Ten months later they decided to build a Chapel which was opened in the Spring of 1801. In April of the following year a call was extended to John Paterson, then one of the Glasgow students but later Dr Paterson of St. Petersburg. His ordination took place in the Spring/

Spring of 1803 , but his pastorate was a brief one of some twelve months. The next minister of the Church was Alexander Kerr who also was one of Greville Ewing's students.. He was ordained on January 23rd 1806 and is reported "to have laboured for nineteen years without seeing much fruit". For a time he eked out his small salary by teaching and part of the chapel was taken off to serve as a schoolroom. Afterwards he was aided from the Union and was able to give up his school.⁽¹⁶⁾

CUPAR - 1800.

Mr Robert Haldane at one time had a Tabernacle in Cupar in connection with which a Congregational Church was formed in 1800. Here Mr Francis Dick ministered for some time with much acceptance, but partly because of the Tabernacle being sold by Mr Haldane to another body and partly because of the unpopularity of the pastor, Mr Peter McLaren, who was ordained in 1809,⁽¹⁷⁾ the cause gradually sank.

DALKEITH - 1804.

Towards the end of 1799 a house "for the preaching of the Gospel by ministers of Christ of every denomination" was opened in Dalkeith. Considerable interest was aroused and many "triumphs of the Gospel over the powers of darkness" achieved. It would appear that, as in many other cases, a Congregational Church grew out of this evangelistic effort. The first pastor was Mr Alexander Arthur, who took an active part in the formation of the Union.⁽¹⁸⁾ His settlement took place in 1804.

DUMFRIES/

(16) Thomas Brisbane, Brief History of the Cong. Church at Cambuslang passim.

(17) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) Cupar Church

(18) Miss. Magazine (1799) p. 480.

DUMFRIES - 1805 or 1806.

Mr James Haldane preached in Dumfries in the summer of 1801 every Sunday for four months from a tent in a field. Previous to this time a few serious persons had been holding a prayer meeting. During Mr Haldane's visit the attendance at this gathering greatly increased and it began to be held in a more public manner than formerly. Interest was kept up by visits from Dr Wardlaw and other preachers, but it was not till 1805 or 1806 that a Church was formed. The original members numbered about twenty and had Mr William Watson settled as their first pastor in 1806. His ministry lasted three years. In 1809 he was succeeded by Mr John Dunn, who laboured (19) in Dumfries till his death in 1820.

DUNCANSTONE - 1808.

This Church was formed by brethren who had been members of the Church at Huntly in 1808. These carried into the new Church the Presbyterian practices of the mother Church. Their chapel they built almost entirely with their own hands. Under their first minister, the Rev. Donald Morrison, who remained with them till his (20) death in 1846, the cause prospered greatly.

DUNDEE - WARD CHAPEL.

This Church originated in the union of three Churches which existed in Dundee at the opening of the Nineteenth Century. (1) Members of the Anti-burgher congregation in 1769 left that body on the deposition of their minister, Andrew Scott, and formed a Church on the plan of the Old Scots Independents. (21) On the death of Scott's colleague

and/

(19) Kinniburgh MSS (Sth. Counties) pp. 18 et seq.

(20) R. Troup, "The Missionary Kirk of Huntly" pp. 151, 153.

(21) Vide supra pp. 111-113.

and successor Mr Kirkcaldy, the Church became Congregational and William Maxton, one of the students, from the Seminary supported by Mr R. Haldane, was ordained and inducted on 22nd June 1803. The congregation which had dwindled under Mr Kirkcaldy, revived somewhat under Mr Maxton, but it was not in a position to pay a salary on which he could live, and he had to take up teaching.

(2) In the West Port a Chapel was built for the Relief denomination, to which Mr Neil Douglas from Cupar, Fife, was called. His induction, which coincided with the opening of the building for public worship, took place on the 16th January 1793. On his leaving towards the end of 1797 the congregation, very many of whom had adopted Congregational views, secured from England "supplies" of that denomination. One of these, Mr Durant, was invited to accept the pastorate but declined. A Mr Hartly, also from England was called and settled in 1801. He remained three years and was succeeded on the 28th November 1804 by Mr John Campbell, pastor of the Congregational Church at Dunkeld. His ministry terminated early in 1810 when he accepted a call to Glasgow. (3) On the 19th October 1800 the Tabernacle, which had been built at Mr Robert Haldane's expense, was opened for worship and in January of the following year a Church was formed with Mr William Innes as pastor. Differences of sentiment very soon began to appear and the controversy of 1808 rent the Church. The majority were opposed to the new views, but Mr Haldane, to whom ~~the building belonged~~, ~~favoured the minority~~. A new place of meeting had, therefore, to be found in a hall in Barrack Street and later in the Sailors' Hall.

Hall. While they were meeting there Mr David Russel, from Frederick Street, Aberdeen, was called, and the call being accepted his induction took place on 19th August 1809.

Shortly after Mr Russel's settlement Mr Maxton died and many of his members joined the Sailors' Hall congregation. Eight months later in October 1810, the West Port Church became vacant and almost immediately the members made a proposal of union to Mr Russel and his people. This proposal being acceptable, the union of the Churches took place on Xmas Eve 1810. The West Port Chapel was the place of worship for the united congregation till 1833 when the present building was opened and the name "Ward Chapel" taken from a field in part of which it was erected.⁽²²⁾

LOCHEE - 1803.

A Church was formed in Lochee, now a part of Dundee but then a village, in 1803 with Mr Alexander Thomson as pastor. He served here for seventeen years with considerable success. He seems to have had the village as a sphere of religious activity to himself, but other religious bodies getting a footing towards the end of his ministry, the cause gradually languished and in 1829 the building was sold and the few members left joined the Church in Dundee.⁽²³⁾

WHITELY - 1803.

This "was a village not far from Dundee, but has long been supplanted by a new one some distance from where it stood, on the road from Dundee to Perth". (We take it the reference is to Invergowrie). Here during the years 1803/

(22) Kinniburgh MSS (Forfarshire & Kincardine) pp.1 et seq.
 (23) Ibid p. 45

1803 and 1805 there was a Church with some fifteen or sixteen members. Various preachers did good work during that time but no pastor was settled, and the smallness of the population prevented the continuance of the cause. (24)

DUNFERMLINE - 1801.

A few earnest persons at this place "having been desirous of enjoying what they esteemed a pure and Scriptural communion and of having a place opened for the use of any faithful Gospel Minister who might visit them, in 1801 united in fellowship for these purposes", and built a Chapel capable of holding nearly 500 persons. For a time they had preaching from the students under Mr Ewing. They then called Mr Peter Grant, who had laboured among them for some months, and on the 22nd December 1801 he was inducted. Two years later he left owing to their inability to pay his salary (£40 per annum). From that time till 1805 they were without a pastor, but in that year they chose two of their number for the office. But a short time after this almost all of them became Baptists. Different attempts were made to revive the cause but without success till 1840 when the present Church in Canmore Street was formed. (25)

DUNKELD - 1800.

The preaching of Greville Ewing, Dr Bogue, ^{and} John Aikman in Dunkeld and the neighbourhood in the closing years of the 18th century so impressed the people that a petition was sent to the Society for Propagating the Gospel for a regular supply of preachers. The result was a visit of some weeks duration by James Haldane when much good was done. Prayer meetings were held and the building of a chapel/

(24) Ibid p. 47

(25) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) Dunfermline

chapel was commenced. The Church was formed in 1800 and on the 6th May 1801 John Campbell, one of Greville Ewing's first students, was ordained and inducted. He accepted a call to Dundee in 1804 and the same year Mr McLeod was settled as his successor. He "found the Church in a state unfit to endure the exercise of discipline, the majority of the members having only a form of godliness without its power", and therefore he proceeded to dissolve the Church. Those who wished for fellowship had to wait upon him, that he might examine them as to their fitness. A number did wait upon him and some were thus reunited, but great offence was taken by others, "and the heartburnings and hatred to the cause, thus excited, long continued". Shortly after the reconstitution of the Church the pastor embraced Baptist views and left. A succession of preachers followed but none was ordained till 1809, when Robert Kinniburgh, believed to be the last individual whom Robert Haldane sent out as a preacher to any of the Congregational Churches of Scotland, was set apart to the office. Mr Kinniburgh found that most of the leading members had adopted Baptist views and further, that Mr McLeod by frequent visits to Dunkeld was encouraging others to the same attitude. At Xmas 1810 he left for Edinburgh having found it impossible to carry on. The Church ceased to meet till 1813 when Mr John Black (26) settled in Dunkeld and a fresh start was made.

EDINBURGH - ALBANY STREET - 1799.

The circumstances in which the first Congregational Church in Edinburgh originated and its formal constitution (27) in January 1799 have been already narrated. Its early years were times of great blessing, but the controversy of 1808 both/

(26) Ibid (Perthshire) pp. 71-77.

(27) Vide supra pp. 173-77; 180 et. seq.

both disrupted the Church and scattered the great congregation to which James Haldane was wont to preach Sunday after Sunday. The hundred who withdrew to form a Church on the Congregational plan did not long enjoy the ministrations of William Innes, their first pastor, for in 1810 he changed his views on Baptism and resigned. Some seventeen of the members who shared his views went with him and founded a Baptist Church..(This was the beginning of what is now known as Dublin Street Baptist Church). Mr Innes was succeeded in the Congregational Church by Rev. George Payne, of Exeter, who took up the work in 1812. So greatly did the membership increase that the building of a new Church became imperative. The present building in Albany Street was therefore erected in 1816 and opened the following year.

AUGUSTINE CHURCH - 1803.

The cause at the Tabernacle prospered so greatly at its inception that a second place of worship was deemed desirable. This was erected in North College Street at the expense of its first pastor, John Aikman, who had been James Haldane's colleague at the Circus. Here Mr Aikman laboured with signal success till his death in 1834. The Church which began in 1803, was known as North College Street Chapel until the removal in 1861 to the present building in George ~~Street~~ IV. Bridge when it became Augustine Church.

ELGIN - 1804.

This Church was formed on Wednesday 4th January 1804 with William Bannatyne as the pastor. The circumstances under which the Church was formed were somewhat peculiar.

In/

(28) Kinniburgh MSS (Albany Street, Edinburgh) pp. 1 et seq.
 (29) J. Ross, "W.L. Alexander, D.D." pp. 71-76.

In 1801 Mr Ballantyne, who had formed a Congregational Church at Thurso, came to Elgin to minister to a numerous body who called themselves "A Free Presbyterian Congregation". "Find-them a very mixed and ill-assorted body, he began to apply discipline and gradually touched upon Congregational principles". His people were not prepared to submit to this and after much contention and confusion they dismissed him. Some of the members, however, followed him, and to these he began to preach in a garden and afterwards in a hall. From among these the Elgin Congregational Church was formed. A meeting place for the Church was found in the Tabernacle which Mr Haldane had built. The effort, however, did not prosper. A building to seat 1300 had week after week but a handful of worshipers. At the end of 1806 or early in 1807 Mr Ballantyne, who had before this adopted the Glasite views he was to publish in a tract which caused such controversy among the Churches, resigned. His immediate successor, Alexander Stewart, soon after coming to Elgin adopted Baptist views, and the Haldanes doing likewise, the Congregation were deprived of a meeting place. A small chapel, that had originally belonged to the Episcopalians, was rented and proved more suited to their needs. Neil McNeil, one of the Edinburgh students, took up the work and attained considerable success. He was repeatedly urged to assume the office of pastor from his arrival in 1808, but he declined to do so till 1815, when his induction took place. He remained minister till 1854, a year before his death.

(30)

ELIE -

A/

(30) J. Stark, "Sketch of History of Elgin Cong. Ch." passim.
Kinniburgh MSS (Moray) Elgin.

A Church was started in Elie in 1802 but had no settled pastor till 1805 when Mr Gilbert was inducted. Ill health compelled him to resign in 1808. The cause progressed for some years under a succession of faithful pastors.

FALKIRK - 1803.

Visits of agents of the Society for propagating the Gospel at Home were responsible for the starting of a Congregational Church in this place in 1803 with Mr Robert Caldwell, a student from the Glasgow seminary, as pastor. His ordination took place on the 22nd November 1803. He remained for ten years, leaving for Wick in
(31)
1813.

FALKLAND- 1806.

A Church was started in this place in 1806 and had James Garden ordained as pastor in October of the following year. He resigned in 1810 and became a parochial teacher under the Established Church. The cause seems to have lapsed
(32)
after his departure but was revived in 1840.

FORRES -

Occasional visits to Forres were paid by various itinerant preachers at the beginning of the century. Regular preaching was first given by David Sutherland who was followed by John Martin in March 1802. Much excitement and blessing followed his labours in the district, and two years later in 1804 a Church was formed over which he pre-
(33)
sided for thirty years.

TRADERBURGH/

- (31) Ibid (Stirling & Dumbarton)
- (32) Ibid (Fife)
- (33) Ibid (Moray)

FRASERBURGH - 1803.

The preaching of James Haldane in this town and neighbourhood led to the starting of a Church in 1803.

The first minister was the Rev. Udney Anderson, who served
(34)
for twelve years.

GARLIESTON - 1803.

2?

K. 94, 2 / 17

Messrs James Haldane and John Campbell visited Garlieston in the year 1800 during their preaching tour through Galloway. The result of their labours in Garlieston was the formation of a Church. It was formed in the year 1803, and at the same time Thomas Smith, one of Mr Ewing's students was settled as pastor. He laboured in
(35)
this, his ~~second~~ charge till his death.

GATEHOUSE-OF-FLEET - Circa 1806.

The labours of various itinerant preachers were responsible for the gathering of this Church. The probable date of its formation was 1806, for in July 1807 the first pastor, ~~Archibald Miller~~ **was ordained**. He continued with
(36)
success for thirty years.

GARVALD - 1804.

In 1804 a small Church was started in this village. The original members came from the Church at Haddington. Mr J. Dun was chosen pastor and a small neat chapel built. Mr Dun's stay was very short, for he left in 1806. He was followed by Mr George Forrester, who was "succeeding beyond the most sanguine expectations" when the 1808
(37)
controversy wrecked the cause.

GLASGOW/

(34) King pp. 43-44

(35) ~~Kinniburgh~~ MSS (Sth. Counties) pp. 15 et seq.

(36) Ibid p. 17

(37) Ibid (Haddington) pp. 9-11.

GLASGOW - Hillhead Church.

The Congregation gathered by Greville Ewing in the Glasgow Tabernacle was formally constituted **as** a Church in 1800. Mr Haldane's adoption of Baptist views deprived the congregation of a meeting house, for the building was his property. Greville Ewing resigned the pastorate and proposed to hold services temporarily in a hall, but his people heartily requested him to resume his office and a chapel was erected in West Nile Street. This building
(38)
was opened in 1809.

GLASGOW - Elgin Place - 1803.

This Church had its origin in circumstances similar to those in which Augustine Church, Edinburgh, began. The latter was brought into being through the success of the Edinburgh Tabernacle, the former through the success of the Glasgow Tabernacle. The first meeting place was in Albion Street, and Dr Ralph Wardlaw was the first minister. On Wednesday the 16th February the triple event took place of the chapel being opened, the Church formed and the young minister being ordained. The original members numbered sixty-two. Despite careful examination of those who applied for membership the Church rapidly grew; and in fifteen years it was crowded out so that a new building
(39)
had to be erected in West George Street.

GRANGEMOUTH - 1806.

A small Church was formed in Grangemouth in 1806 as the result of the preaching of students from Mr Ewing's classes/

(38) Greville Ewing passim: Ewing's "Facts & Documents" passim: Kinniburgh MSS (Lanark) Nile Street.

(39) "Memorials of Elgin Place Church" passim: W.L. Alexander, Ralph Wardlaw passim.

classes. Mr William Watson was called to the pastorate, and for a time there was promise of a strong Church, but after a time the cause declined and on Mr Watson's departure for Dundee in 1832 ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~xxxxxxxx~~ became extinct. (40)

GREENOCK - George Square Church - 1805.

The first Congregational Church in Greenock owed its origin to the interest that some there had in the services that were being held in the Congregational Church at Inverkip. Such services they desired to have nearer home, and preaching was begun in 1804. "The attendance being good, and especially on the Sabbath evenings, the friends of the cause were encouraged to build a commodious chapel". This building was opened by the Rev. Greville Ewing on the 15th December 1805, and Mr John Hercus began his ministry early in the following January. During his ministry the cause at Sir Michael Street made considerable progress. Mr Hercus remained pastor till his death in (41) 1830.

HADDINGTON - 1804

The nucleus of this Church was some twelve or sixteen members of Mr Aikman's Church in North College Street, Edinburgh, who because of the distance from that Church ^{and} ~~were~~ able to attend but seldom./desired a similar Church in their own locality. Services had been conducted in the town by students from 1801 onwards and several of their converts united with the Church at its commencement. Mr James Hill was settled as pastor in 1804 and laboured (42) faithfully till his death in 1812.

HAMILTON/

- (40) Kinniburgh MSS (Stirling & Dumbarton) Grangemouth
 (41) Kinniburgh MSS (Renfrew & Ayr) Greenock Ch: Hist.
 of George Square Cong. Ch. Greenock (1906) pp.1-34.
 (42) Kinniburgh MSS (Haddington & Berwick) pp. 1-6.

HAMILTON - Auchingramont Road - 1807.

The preaching of Messrs Haldane, Ewing and others led to the formation of this Church in 1807 with Mr John Watson as pastor. Lack of support led to his giving up in 1811. Thereafter the brethren met and exhorted each on the Lord's Day if no preacher were available, and so continued till 1822 when they united with the Church
(43)
at Larkhall.

,HARRY - 1810.

A Church was started here in 1810 through the labours of brethren from Kirkwall but no minister was settled till twenty five years later. A chapel, however, was erected very much earlier, in 1817, and the labours
(44)
of visiting preachers were much blessed.

HAWICK - 1805.

In 1798 James Haldane and Rowland Hill preached in Hawick to large congregations. From their joint labours sprang the first Independent Church in the Borders. The members were known as the Haldane party, and worshipped in a building called the Tabernacle. Mr Charles Gray, who had been sent to Hawick, by the Haldanes, was set apart for the office of pastor on the 30th November 1805. The Church, however, had a brief existence, for Mr Gray became a convert to Baptist views and the Church was as
(45)
good as swamped in the immersion of its minister.

HELENSBURGH - 1802.

Several ministers holding Congregational principles preached in Helensburgh in the opening years of the 19th century/

(43) Ibid (Lanark) Hamilton

(44) Ibid (Orkney Islands) p. 12

(45) Ibid (Sth. Counties). pp.24-25.

century. A Church was formed on the Congregational plan in 1802, and in 1803 a Mr Sym was ordained as minister. He became a Baptist and left in 1808. His change of sentiments greatly injured the Church, and his successor, Mr Edwards, who served till 1815, had a difficult and oftentimes discouraging task. (46)

HUNTLY - 1800.

The Anti-burgher Church at Huntly towards the close of the 18th century had as its minister, the Rev. George Cowie, a man with little of that narrowness of outlook and pettiness of spirit that characterised so many of his ministerial brethren at that period. The London Missionary Society from its beginning had in him and his people wholehearted supporters. The movement to establish Sunday Schools also had their sympathy. In Huntly and district they established Sunday Schools at which hundreds were instructed in the truths of the Gospel. When, therefore, Mr Rate, Mr James Haldane's colleague, visited Huntly on their first preaching tour, Mr Cowie's people flocked to hear him, and they were so impressed by what they had heard that, when the next day Mr Haldane himself arrived, the elders with their pastor's consent, gave him the use of their chapel. In the morning Mr Cowie sat at a window in his manse and listened to the service, but in the evening he accompanied Mr Haldane to the chapel and there listened to the preacher openly. The privilege of preaching in their chapel Mr Cowie and his elders also accorded to Rev. Rowland Hill at a later date. Even before the visit of Mr Hill to Huntly his co-presbyters had/

(46) Ibid (Stirling & Dumbarton) Helensburgh.

had initiated proceedings against him. He was summoned to appear before them, and at a meeting on October 5th asked whether he had attended the ministrations of Independents and Episcopalians. Having admitted that he had listened to Mr James Haldane and Rev. Rowland Hill, he declined to answer any further questions and left the Court. In his absence he was suspended from the exercise of the ministry for this countenancing of missionary preachers. On the 20th April 1800 the case came before the Synod and sentence of deposition was passed upon him. He was guilty neither of heresy nor of immorality. He was neither inefficient in his ministry nor ungodly in his conduct. And yet the Church cast him out. His people, however, stood by him to a man. What the Anti-burghers lost, the Independents gained. With the Congregationalists they threw in their lot and so began the
(47)
Huntly Congregational Church.

INVERKIP -

Preaching in the village of Inverkip was engaged in by students from Glasgow during the summer of 1800, their expenses being met chiefly by Miss Maxwell, later Mrs Greville Ewing. In November of that year Mr George Robertson later of Paisley received an invitation numerously signed by the inhabitants of the village to take up his abode and preach statedly among them. By the appointment of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home he went and began services in an unfurnished garret. The following summer a chapel was built and a Church formed. For five
years/

(47) A. Troup: Missionary Kirk of Huntly pp.76-88.

years he laboured in Inverkip with considerable success. He was succeeded by Thomas Low, who found conditions hard and difficult. After his death in 1851 the Church became extinct. (48)

KEITH - Early in the 19th Century.

A small Congregational Church existed in this place early in the 19th century. It was supplied by Mr Jopp and Mr Nicoll and was partially sustained by Mr Haldane. When he changed his views on Baptism, the building, which it would seem belonged to him, was sold; but the bulk of the members applied to the Burgher Synod for sermon, (49) and the congregation was received into that communion.

KELTIE BRIDGE - 1804.

There was a Church here in 1804 but it seems to have had a very short existence. No mention of it or even indirect reference to it is to be found in Kinniburgh's MSS, which gives a full account of the other Fife Churches.

KINTYRE - 1802.

In 1800 Messrs James Haldane and John Campbell visited and preached throughout this district. The Society for the Propagating of the Gospel at Home followed up their labours by sending Archibald McCallum to itinerate in this wide area. Such success attended his preaching that in less than two years a Congregational Church was formed with 50 members. Six years later there were four Churches with an aggregate membership of 272, and connected/

(48) Kinniburgh MSS (Renfrew & Ayr) Inverkip

(49) King p. 39

ed with these Churches were 26 prayer meetings. The clergy of the district were bitterly opposed to Mr McCallum and threatened to send him out of the country. The proprietor of the estate on which many of the members lived was so bitterly opposed that he compelled them to relinquish either their farms or their Church. They declined to desert their pastor, and as a result many of them took up their abode in or around Campbelltown and there a Church was formed in 1805. Three of the families went to Arran and there succeeded in starting another Church in 1806.⁽⁵⁰⁾

KIRKCALDY - 1800.

Sometime in the year 1798 a few individuals of various religious bodies who had become dissatisfied with the coldness and indifference of their own denominations heard of the work that was going on at the Circus, Edinburgh, and having attended the preaching there, they agreed to unite in observing the Lord's Supper as dispensed in that place. Becoming acquainted with each other they met weekly for prayer and reading the Scriptures and once a month they had a preacher from Edinburgh. There was no formal constitution of the Church. The members who had been admitted to the Circus Church admitted others in whom they had confidence. In response to their request Mr Archibald McLae was sent to them as a preacher. He left in 1803. His successor, James Mitchell, rent the Church by his advocacy of the teaching of the Bereans. William Brown, from the Edinburgh seminary/

(50) Kinniburgh MSS pp. 1-18.

seminary as his two predecessors had been, had to resign owing to ill-health in 1808. In May 1810 Mr Robert Aitkenhead took up the work. ^{ordained 1811 K 7, 9 / 627} The Church then was in a very low state, but under his care it recovered and considerable progress was made. When he had been twenty-five years pastor, he adopted Baptist views and received a call to a Baptist Church in Perth, but the Church requested him to stay and Baptism was made a matter of mutual forbearance. (51)

KIRKINTILLOCH - 1802.

Occasional preaching in this place was given by Mr Ewing's students in 1800 and early in 1801. Mr Hugh Fraser was the first stated preacher. Under his ministry the Church was formed in 1802. Mr George Greig, who had been assistant to Mr Ewing, was ordained and inducted in June 1804 but left for London two years later. After his departure there was a succession of preachers but no settled minister. In 1809 the cause became extinct. The handful left were unable to support a minister, and the Chapel had to be sold to pay the debt on it. (52)

KIRKLISTON - 1803.

A Church was formed in this place in 1803 with Mr William Ritchie as minister. At one time the membership was fully sixty and the congregations Sunday by Sunday considerable. The controversy of 1808 affected the Church adversely. Many withdrew and the pastor becoming disheartened accepted a call to Haddington in 1813. Soon after his removal the Church broke up. (53)

KIRRIEMUIR/

- (51) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) Kirkcaldy
- (52) Ibid (Stirling & Dunbarton) Kirkintilloch
- (53) Ibid (Linlithgowshire) Kirkliston

KIRRIEMUIR - 1804.

The Church here was formed by certain members of the Relief Church, who on that body giving up their cause in Kirriemuir, associated themselves with the Congregational Churches in Dundee. Student supply was provided for a time, and in 1804 Mr Dunbar was settled as pastor of the Church which had just been formed. (54)

KIRKWALL - 1805.

On his first preaching tour in 1797 Mr Haldane had a memorable ministry in Kirkwall, thousands listening to his preaching on many occasions. As a result of his labours and those of the preachers who followed him a congregation was gathered and a Church formed in 1805. Mr J. Black became pastor in 1806. He stayed but a short time and was followed by David Ramsay in 1807. Mr Ramsay was later joined by Mr Robertson and together they did a great work not only in Kirkwall but throughout all the islands. (55)

KNOCKANDO - 1804.

In this rural district some earnest souls "who valued the Gospel and were willing to travel for it" formed the nucleus of the Church which was formed in 1804 "by prayer and fasting" Mr John Munro was the first and only pastor. After his death in 1853 the Church gradually languished and died. (56)

LARKHALL - 1804.

A small Church was in existence in Larkhall as early as 1804. There is no record of any ordained minister over this/

(54) Ibid (Forfar) Kirriemuir

(55) Ibid (Orkney) passim,

(56) Ibid (Moray) Knockando. et Kinniburgh's History of Independence

this Church till 1822. There is, however, reason to believe that Thomas Alexander who was then ordained had been in charge of the Church for many years before. (57)

LEITH - Constitution Street Church.

By members of the Tabernaacle a Congregational Church was formed in 1805 but there is no record of a settled pastor till 1817.

LERWICK - 1808.

The Church here was the fruit of the labours of agents of the Society for the Propagating of the Gospel at Home in the Shetland Isles and was formed in 1808. Mr George Reid was the first pastor and remained till his death in 1845. Sixteen members called him but in twelve years the sixteen had become one hundred and forty. (58)

LETHAM - 1803.

Constituted Sept 1803 Mr Lindsay set apart 26th October
Kinnabrough This Church was solemnly constituted on 29th October
7.7.9. 1803. Preaching for some time previously had been given
pp 222-3 by students from Mr Innes' class. Mr William Lindsay was the first pastor and held the office for nearly forty years. The cause proved a **struggling one**. Lindsay had to turn to teaching and also to keeping a shop to augment the pittance the people were able to give him. (59)

LEVEN - 1804. 2? *Kinnabrough's History of Independence, p. 167*

Mr John Elder went to Leven in 1802 on behalf of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home and as the result of his labours a Church was formed in 1804. The cause was a small and struggling one, and throughout his entire ministry of thirty years the pastor has to keep a/

(57) Ibid (Lanark) Larkhall
 (58) Ibid (Shetland) pp. 1 et seq.
 (59) Ibid (Forfar) Letham.

(60)
a stationer's shop to augment his income.

LINLITHGOW.

This cause began with the preaching of John Campbell of the Grassmarket, Edinburgh, in the first year of the 19th century. In 1803 or 1804 a barn was taken and a succession of preachers sent from Edinburgh. Mr Cullen one of Mr Haldane's students, settled as preacher and began to erect a chapel, but when the work was only half completed, it was stopped owing to lack of funds. Mr Haldane then came to the rescue and the building was finished. A sermon by Mr Cullen gave rise to a suspicion of heterodoxy and he had to leave. He was succeeded by the Rev. A.W. Knowles, who found the chapel desolate and the congregation gone. In the face of much opposition he carried on and in the following year a small Church was formed with an initial membership of sixteen. The Church grew slowly, but suffered much from the removal of members
(61)
to other parts.

LOCHWINNOCH - Circa 1805.

A Church was formed in this place about 1805. Mr Hugh Fraser was ordained pastor in 1806 and remained till 1810. The congregation was never very large or flourishing and
(62)
after a few years ceased to meet.

MONTROSE - 1800.

This Church was gathered by the labours of Mr George Cowie, a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, who resigned his license in July 1799. He was dissatisfied with that Church both in its administration and its constitution. For
some/

60

61

62

sometime he worshipped with a company of Old Scots Independents who met in a garret room. On the death of one of the pastors of this congregation their meeting broke up, and half of the members placed themselves under the pastoral care of Mr Cowie. Some others being gathered by his evangelistic work in the district, he was ordained pastor on the 28th August 1801. He remained till his removal to Edinburgh in 1805, when he became a tutor at the classes there. After his departure was a succession of preachers but no settled pastor till 1808 when Mr John Black went to Montrose. His departure to Dunkeld in 1813 seems to have been connected with the return of Mr Cowie to Montrose and his desire to take up his former position as pastor, which he eventually did. (63)

MUSSELBURGH - 1806.

Preaching was provided here in the early years of the Haldane movement by students and others, and in 1806 a Church was formed with Mr John Watson as its first pastor. Mr Watson later became the first Secretary of the Congregational Union. (64)

NAIRN - 1806.

This Church was formed in 1806 when Mr James Dewar became pastor. For some years before his settlement in Nairn Mr Dewar had done fine work as an evangelist in Argyleshire. In 1804 he came to Nairn and such blessing attended his preaching that a call to remain permanently was given him, and in July 1806 he was solemnly ordained to what was to prove his life work. (65)

NEWPORT/

(63) Ibid (Forfar) pp. 32 et seq.

(64) W.L. Alexander, Memoir of J. Watson passim.

(65) Scot. Cong. Mag. III pp. 144-157.

NEWPORT (FIFE) - 1802.

K. 7.2.2. p. 335.

A Church was started here in 1802 with Mr Thomas Taylor as pastor. He was not long spared to carry on the work. It is believed that he died very soon after his ordination. In 1805 one of the members of the Church, Mr Thomas Just, assumed the pastorate and did good work for
(66)
forty years.

OBAN - 1805.

A Congregational Church was formed in Oban in 1805 through the evangelistic labours of Mr Dugald McEwan and Mr John Reid. For six years there was no pastor appointed, but in 1811 John Campbell from Breadalbane was ordained. Pastor and people in these early days suffered much per-
(67)
secution at the hands of the clergy and the landlords.

PAISLEY - School Wynd Church - Late in the 18th Century.

It is claimed by Ross that this Church dates back
(68)
to 1795. This claim is also made in Kinniburgh's MSS. This early date is based on oral evidence which may, or may not be correct. The hymn book in use by the Church bears the date 1796, writes a former pastor in 1848. "Certain old men" say that it was "published the year after their formation". On this rests the claim that the Paisley Church is the oldest of the denomination in Scotland. There is no documentary or other historical evidence to support it. We, therefore, deem this 1795 date as an interesting tradition but too vague to be accepted with any degree of certainty. Against this early date it has to be remembered that in the early years of the Union the Aberdeen and not
the/

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- (66) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) Forgan
(67) Ibid (Argyleshire) Oban
(68) Ross p. 236.

the Paisley Church was officially referred to as the
 (69)
 oldest of the Scottish Congregational Churches. (This
 question is discussed in Appendix III). What seems
 certain that is sometime in the last years of the 18th
 Century this Church originated in the agitations of the
 Friends of the People, when some religious people in
 Paisley began to see the need for reform in the Church
 as well as in the State. Deeming the reform of the
 Established Church impossible, they formed themselves
 into an Independent Church and met in a malt-barn. They
 heard of a Burgher Minister, Mr Wylie, who sympathised
 with their views and after a time they called him to be
 their pastor. As to when this step was taken there is
 no record. Mr Wylie remained only a short time with them
 but during his ministry a chapel to seat 500 was built.
 His adoption of Baptist views hurt the new Church, for
 many of the members also became Baptists and withdrew.
 For some time there was no settled minister but only
 occasional preachers. The students from Mr Ewing's
 classes gave frequent "supply" as did others, both ministers
 and lay-men. One of the students, Mr John Young, accepted
 the pastorate in 1801 but becoming like his predecessor,
 a Baptist, he resigned. In February 1807 ~~1806~~ Mr George
 Robertson from Inverkip took up the work and had an eight
 year's happy ministry. The membership at his induction
 stood at 49, but each year some twenty new members were
 (70)
 added.

PERTH - Circa 1798.

The beginnings of Congregationalism in Perth are
 difficult/

(69) Scot. Cong. Mag. III. p. 236

(70) Kinniburgh MSS (Renfrew & Ayr) Paisley.

difficult to make out. The historian of that Church claims that some thinking men became Congregationalists in 1793 or 1794 and bought Paul Street Chapel about that time. In October of the latter year James Garie came from Ireland to minister to them and remained for eighteen months. He was eager to have the chapel linked up with the Established Church as a chapel of ease, but the proprietors were opposed to such a step, and Mr Garie resigned. He endeavoured to enter the Church of Scotland but without success. The old chapel meantime had been sold, but some of his former people invited him to return. This was in 1798, in which year there appeared in the Missionary Magazine the announcement of the purchase of Paul's Chapel for the use of "Mr Garie and a congregation of Christian people". The historian of the Church "supposes" that the Church was only then properly constituted. It is, however, a mere surmise, for there is no historical proof as to when this did take place. The close association of the pastor with the Haldanes and his participation in the ordination of James Haldane on February 3rd 1799 leads us to think that the formal constitution of a Congregational Church in Perth very probably took place about this time. Certain it is there was a Church formed to which Mr Garie ministered until his lamented death early in 1801, but we cannot say definitely when this was done.

After Mr Garie's death Dr Wardlaw who was then fresh from college and others were in charge of the Church for longer or shorter periods and in the Spring of 1807 William Orme was sent from the Edinburgh classes. In 1808 he was settled as pastor along with two of the brethren. This system/

Vide Kinniburgh's Father of Independency pp 5-7

system of Church order had been introduced into the Perth Church sometime before Mr Orme's coming, but after trial of it he and a majority of the members decided to revert to the former order. This caused a rupture and Mr Orme and his supporters withdrew. They left the minority in possession of the new building which had been opened in 1801 and began services in their former chapel. In Perth Mr Orme remained till 1824.

It has been generally believed that Mr Garie's was the only Congregational Church in Perth at the beginning of last Century, but there would seem to have been one, if not, two others. Kinniburgh has a marginal entry about the ordination of Mr William McKillican on 28th October 1802 "to the pastoral care of a Church in Perth, consisting of persons acquainted with the Gaelic language, and who met for worship and participation of Divine ordinances administered in that language". This Church Mr McKillican left in 1804 to take up work on the south side of Loch Tay. As to its origin nothing is known. It is possible that Mr McKillican was the first pastor. What happened to it after his departure we cannot say. It may have been a short-lived experiment that began and ended with his⁽⁷¹⁾ pastorate. Of another Church in Perth we have trace in a letter of congratulation to the George Street Church, Aberdeen. This letter is dated Perth, 4th December 1798 and is signed by "James Colquhoun, Pator" of the Congregational Church there. In its name he congratulates the brethren in Aberdeen on being "organised on the Apostolic plan of Primitive Christianity", and adds, "It is now two years since we were organised on the liberal English Congregational plan.....

We/

(71) Ibid MSS (Perth) pp. 78 et seq. W. Sievwright. Histor. Sketch of Cong. Ch., Perth passim.

We endeavour, as you do, to steer clear of the Scotch dissenters and the Scotch Independents, where it is but too evident that the contracted love of party, too much abounds." Of this Church there is no mention in the Sketch of the Perth Church already referred to. It may be that those thinking men who adopted Congregational views in 1793 or 1794 were responsible for the formation of this Church in 1796 after Mr Garie left but of this we cannot be sure. It is, however, plain that at the time of Mr Garie's return to Perth there was already organised in the City a Congregational Church, but as to its origin we can only speculate and as to its ends we are equally ignorant, for no trace of its existence apart (72) from this letter have we been able to discover.

PITLESSIE • 1802.

In 1802 a Church was formed in this place with some thirty-three members. Mr Currier, who had been a farmer in the neighbourhood of Airthrey, was settled, on concluding a course of study under Mr Ewing, as pastor. He was the first and only pastor. The Church broke up at (73) his death.

PITSLIGO - 1803.

Here for some three years there was a struggling Church under the charge of John Beattie. He left because of the inability of the Church to support his family. The members after a time became the nucleus of a Baptist Church (74) in the village.

ST. ANDREWS - 1805.

St. Andrews was one of the places selected by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home as a preaching Station/

(72) Bulloch p. 173

(73) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) Pitlessie

(74) King pp. 42-43.

station. Here Mr Haldane, the Rev. Rowland Hill and others preached from time to time. Mr Thomas Paton, who had received religious impressions while in the Army, was ordained as pastor in October 1805, and the Church seems to have been formed some three months previously. (75)
Here Mr Paton carried on a long, a faithful ministry.

+1818 K. F. G. I.

SANQUHAR - 1807.

In Sanquhar in 1807 and Church was started with fifteen members, and Mr David Davidson was ordained to the ministry. For some time the cause had fair success but disputes on the question of Baptism wrecked it about (76)
the time Mr Davidson left.

SAUCHIEBURN.

About 1809 under the ministry of Mr T. McKinnon this Church, which was originally the mother Church of the Bereans and as such was started in 1773, appears to have become definitely Congregational. Mr McKinnon was the one and only minister in that connection, for after his (77)
death in 1854 the Church ceased to meet.

STIRLING - 1804.

Certain individuals in this town who had been meeting together for prayer formed themselves into a Church in the Spring of 1804. They had various preachers for a time, but when the Church had attained a membership of about forty in July 1807 Mr William Penry was settled (78)
among them.

STUARTFIELD - 1802.

Three/

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- (75) Kinniburgh MSS (Fife) St. Andrews
 - (76) Ibid (Renfrew & Ayr) Sanquhar
 - (77) Ibid (Forfar) Sauchieburn
 - (78) Ibid (Stirling & Dunbarton) Stirling.

three members of the Anti-burgher Church at Clola, who declined to submit to discipline for having gone to hear Mr Stephens of Aberdeen preach, joined with nine converts of a neighbouring Episcopalian Divine in forming a prayer meeting and later a Church in this district. They built a chapel, in 1801 and formed themselves into a Church the following year. They called Rev. James Robertson who (79) laboured among them for thirty years.

THURSO - 1799.

The cause here originated in the labours of Messrs Haldane & Aikman during their first preaching tour. Many individuals who had their attention directed then to the truth, desired to form a Church. A meeting house was built "and in the beginning of September 1799 Mr James Haldane and Mr John Aikman separated the brethren and united them in Church fellowship". Mr William Ballantyne, who was then called to the pastorate was the first of several ministers who made but a brief sojourn in Thurso and through the brevity of whose service the Church suffered considerably (80) in its early years.

WESTHILLS - 1805.

A small Church began here in 1805 largely through the efforts of friends in the George Street Church, Aberdeen. The first pastor was ordained in 1806 and continued till (81) 1835 with fair success.

WICK - 1799.

Some forty converts of the Haldane-Aikman tour formed themselves into a Church and invited Mr J. Cleghorn to be their/

(79) King pp. 39-41

(80) Kinniburgh MSS (Caithness) Thurso

(81) King p. 48.

their minister. His ordination took place on the ²17th
 March 1799. For almost fifteen years he laboured in
 Wick with great success. (82) —

accepted call to Glasgow 1812

Kinniburgh 7 of 9 p 287

(82) Kinniburgh MSS (Caithness) Wick.

*What about Blackhills, Aberdeenshire where Mr. John Smith
 was ordained in 1806. [or is this Westhills?]*

Kinniburgh. Father of Independence, pp 196 ff

APPENDIX III.THE OLDEST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN SCOTLAND.

The question as to which of the various Congregational Churches in Scotland can claim to be the oldest has been touched upon in Appendix II. From the particulars submitted there it is obvious that four of the Churches may be held to have begun about the same time. These are Annan, Paisley, Perth and George Street Church, Aberdeen.

With regard to Annan two dates have been given, either of which would entitle it to precedence in point of time over either Perth or Aberdeen and one of which would point to this Church as the oldest in Scotland. There is, however, clear proof that the existing Congregational Church at Annan has no connection with that effort of the closing years of the Eighteenth Century. The first attempts to establish a Congregational Church in that community ended in failure about 1810. The present Church is of later date - May 1843 - and neither building nor members belonged to the earlier effort.

The date of the beginning of the Paisley Church has been stated by Ross and Kinniburgh to be 1795 or 1796. They offer, however, in support of this date, which would undoubtedly make this Church the oldest of the denomination in Scotland, only a vague oral tradition on which, since it is unsupported by any other evidence, it would be unwise to place too much reliance.

With regard to the formation of the Church at Perth, Kinniburgh says frankly, "that Mr Garie and his flock were Congregational in their order of Church government we cannot assert" (MSS (Perth) p. 79). W. Siewwright, the historian of the Church, is very indefinite as to the formation of a Church on the Congregational plan among Mr Garie's followers. It would seem/

seem from the letter quoted in Appendix II that there was a Church of the Congregational order in Perth in 1796. If we had any record of that Church uniting with Mr Garie's, then it might be claimed that the Perth Church was the earliest, but no such record do we have.

Of the date of the formation of the Aberdeen Church we are in no doubt. The first minute book of that Church has been preserved, and therefrom we learn that the forming and organising of the new cause as a Congregational Church took place on the 16th September 1798.

The position, the historian of the Aberdeen Church claims, is this, that while at Paisley and Perth there may have been Congregational Churches in 1796 and 1798 respectively, proof thereof is lacking, or at least "not quite clear". The Church at Aberdeen, on the other hand, is the first among the Congregational Churches in Scotland to possess bona-fide historical evidence of its existence".

One further point, and to our mind an important one, in favour of the claim that the George Street Church, Aberdeen, is the earliest of existing Congregational Churches is that officially, and at a time when those who had been present at the beginning of the Haldane movement and its Congregational development, had not yet passed away, the Aberdeen Church was recognised as the first of the Churches. In May 1843 the Congregational Union met in Aberdeen and repeated reference is made to the priority of the George Street Church. "Those acquainted with the ecclesiastical history of our country," said the Rev. W.A. Knowles of Linlithgow, one of the Haldane students nearly forty years before, "are aware that previously not a few small Congregational societies had been established in various parts/

parts of the land. But the first society, constituted on which we may be permitted to designate the broad, the liberal, the aggressive principles of our denomination was formed within these venerable walls. It has been erroneously supposed that Messrs Haldane were the first to promulgate Congregational principles, and establish Independent Churches, in Scotland. To these gentlemen, and their zealous colleagues our country, especially our denomination owe a debt of gratitude. But before they avowed our distinctive principles, an Independent Church was formed in Aberdeen, and assembled to observe New Testament ordinances in this place of worship. When we think of this house as the cradle of our denomination in our fatherland, we may experience emotions akin to those of the traveller, who stands at the spring-head of a river, that is diffusing its salubrious streams through the length and breadth of the land. "Mr Knowles was speaking to an official motion which as unmistakeably referred to the priority of the Aberdeen Church, for it described the chapel opened in 1798 and in which they were met as "the chapel first erected" and the Church as "the first" of the Churches of the Union.⁽¹⁾ From these and similar utterances at the same Assembly by those who had been connected with the Churches from their beginnings it would seem that they were convinced that the George Street Church was not only the oldest Congregational Church in the North but the oldest in Scotland, and although such claims were then so boldly made we find^{no} trace of any contradiction.

(1) Scot. Cong. Mag. III pp. 236-239.

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" III Congregational Histories as specified in the
 footnotes.